THE MILITARY MENTOR:

BEING A

SERIES OF LETTERS

RECENTLY WRITTEN BY

A GENERAL OFFICER

TO

HIS SON,

ON HIS ENTERING THE ARMY:

COMPRISING A COURSE OF ELEGANT INSTRUCTION, CALCULATED TO UNITE THE CHARACTERS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF

THE GENTLEMAN AND THE SOLDIER.

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LETTERS

FROM A

GENERAL OFFICER

TO

HIS SON.

LETTER XX.

ON THE SCIENCE OF WAR IN GENERAL.

IF it be true that the sciences are noble in proportion as they are useful, what advantage may not that of War be said to possess above almost every other! War is undoubtedly an evil; but it is inevitable, and often necessary. If the first man that reduced to a regular system the art of destroying his fellow-creatures, had no other end in view than to gratify the ambition of sovereigns, he was a monster of whom it may be said that it would have been happy for

the world if he had been strangled at his birth; but if he did it only for the defence of persecuted virtue or for the punishment of insolent and overbearing atrocity, to put a curb on ambition or to restrain the unjust pretensions of violence, humanity ought to raise monuments to his honour.

THERE are five different kinds of war, each of which is to be conducted differently from the others:—the offensive; the defensive; that between equal powers; the auxiliary, which is carried on out of our own territories to succour a prince or ally, or to assist a weaker whom a more powerful has attacked; and civil war.

OFFENSIVE war must be long meditated, before it be openly entered upon: when the success will depend upon two essential points; that the plan be justly formed, and the enterprise conducted with order. It should be well and maturely considered and digested; and with the greatest secrecy, lest, however able the prince or his council may be, some of the precautions necessary to be taken may be discovered. These precautions are infinite in number, as well as in their degrees of importance, both at home and abroad.

DEFENSIVE war may be divided into three

kinds. It is either a war sustained by a state which is suddenly attacked by another, superior in troops and in means; or a prince makes this sort of war by choice on one side of his frontiers, while he carries on offensive war elsewhere; or it is a war become defensive by the loss of a battle.

A defensive war sustained by a state attacked by a superior enemy, depends entirely on the capacity of the general. His particular object should be, to choose advantageous camps to stop the enemy, without however being obliged to fight him; to multiply small advantages; to harass and perplex the enemy in his foraging parties, and thus oblige him to require great escorts; to attack his convoys; to render the passages of rivers or defiles as difficult to him as possible; to compel him to keep his forces together; if he wants to attack a town, to throw in succours before it is invested: in short, in the beginning the chief aim should be, to acquire the enemy's respect by vigilance and activity, and, by forcing him to be circumspect in his marches and manner of encampment, to gain time, and make the enemy lose it. An able general, carefully pursuing these maxims, will inspire courage into his soldiers, and the inhabitants of the

country; while he gives leisure to his prince to take proper precautions for resisting the enemy, and thus changes the nature of this disagreeable and vexatious kind of warfare.—The management of a defensive war requires more military skill than that of an offensive one.

A WAR between equal powers, is that in which the neighbouring princes do not take part, so long as the belligerent parties obtain no great advantage over each other. As to its rules, they are entirely conformable to those already given: but we may take it as a certain maxim in this sort of war, that the general who is the most active and penetrating, will always in the end prevail over him who possesses these qualities in a less degree; because, by his activity and penetration, he will multiply small advantages, till at last they procure him a decisive superiority. A general who is continually attentive to procure himself small advantages, infallibly obtains his end, which is to ruin the enemy's army: in which case he changes the nature of the war, and makes it offensive on his own part, which should ever be his chief object.

AUXILIARY war, is that in which a state succours its neighbours, either in consequence of alliances or engagements entered into with them,

or sometimes to prevent their falling under the power of an ambitious rival.

If it is in virtue of treaties, these must be religiously observed, in furnishing the number of troops prescribed. and even offering to augment the quota if required; or in making a diversion by attacking the common enemy, or his allies.

If it is to prevent a neighbouring state from being crushed by a power who after this conquest may become dangerous to ourselves, there are several measures to be taken for our own particular interest. One of the chief is, to exact from those whom we succour, the possession of some important post in security, lest they should make their peace without our knowledge, or to our prejudice.

The general therefore who is chosen for the auxiliary corps, should possess wisdom, penetration and foresight: wisdom to preserve a proper discipline in his army, that they may give the ally no cause of complaint; foresight and penetration to prevent his own troops from suffering for want of subsistence, or being exposed to the harder parts of the service, except in proportion to their numbers with those of the confederate; and finally, that nothing shall pass without his

knowledge, which may be prejudicial to his master.

Civil or intestine war, is that between parties in the same state. This sort of war, which the animosity of the different factions, and fanaticism, always carry beyond the bounds of humanity and the social duties, has in general no other rules than those of the offensive and the defensive. It has however always been observed, that civil wars form great men and good soldiers; because the nobility, citizens, and labourers, being equally obliged to fight for their property and dearest interests, have all an opportunity of learning the rudiments of war.

It is only during actual service that an officer is called to the full display of his talents, and to give energy to his principles; but in a time of peace these may with most advantage be acquired. Let him *then* employ his leisure hours to gain a complete insight into the duties of his profession: let him quit the circumscribed sphere of minute attentions which so much fetter the mind; let him not confine so extensive a science, and which embraces so many objects, within the sphere of mechanical exercises, and in daily and unwearied evolutions. These purposes, though indispensable, and beyond which ordinary

minds conceive there is hardly any thing to be learnt, to an enlightened officer present only a partial and subordinate view of his art. He perceives how insufficient they are to give him a due notion of the great principles of movement, and of their varied application to the different operations of war.

It is a great error to suppose that the military art may be acquired by habit and experience, without application. Principles and method are absolutely essential. Objects in war present themselves under so many and such various aspects, from the nature of places and of circumstances, that without an established system, it is impossible to derive all the proper advantages even from the most consummate experience, unassisted by theory, which generalises and presents to our view the connection of causes with effects.

When an officer, during a time of peace, has employed himself in acquiring a set of regular principles, he will soon perceive their natural uses and operation: he will be enabled, by means of these, to trace effects to their sources; and he will have it in his power to apply his rules to every circumstance as it arises, however new it may be to him. He will then perceive

how unavailing, and even fatal, bravery, courage, greatness of mind, and natural perspicuity, may become to an officer who has not previously devoted himself to the study of his profession. He will then find that the more brave and intrepid such a man is, the more he will be liable to errors; and that it is even less disadvantageous to be destitute of experience than of theory.

But how is this theory to be acquired? And whence is our instruction to be drawn, if there are neither rules nor system to be found?

Many officers who have felt the necessity of an established theory, have written on the science of war. Read their compositions with attention, and you will there be able to trace these rules; you will there find enlightened precepts which may be of great utility to you. It must be acknowledged that these principles appear in their works frequently without perspicuity, order, or connection; and are scattered in a thousand different places: and that these writers are not agreed in several points, and some of their systems will appear to you even contradictory. Collect them together; examine them, combine them, give to each its proper consideration, and from the result form to yourself a system which may on every occasion serve you as a guide.

"We may have been endowed by nature with military talents," says a writer on the art of war; "but if these are not cultivated by attention and study, we cannot expect them to be improved and matured. Nevertheless, to see the little application of our young officers, any one would suppose that the knowledge of their art is to be gained in a day; that the address, skill, and foresight, which assist them in the most imminent dangers, are born with them; and that they are among the small number of those extraordinary geniuses who appear sometimes in the world at distant intervals, as if for the purpose of saving or overturning empires.—Such was Themistocles. Nobody, says Thucydides, has more fully shown than that celebrated commander, what nature, unassisted by art, is able to effect: and for this he has deserved the applause of all ages; since by natural sagacity alone, without previous study, he constantly perceived the steps he ought to pursue; and by the excellence of his arrangements, and his activity, completed his plans almost as soon as they were formed.

"It is no very singular thing in war," adds the first mentioned author, "to perceive young men even boasting of their ignorance, and avowing themselves enemies to reflection and study.

But do any of these appear likely to rival the fame of Themistocles? The evidence that they bear no resemblance to the illustrious Greek, shows itself in every thing they undertake. Thucydides has justly said, that this great warrior deserved the admiration of all ages; and accordingly he still continues to possess it.

LETTER XXI.

ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF GEOMETRY, GEOGRAPHY, AND DESIGN.

[With details on Gunnery and Fortification.]

THE mathematics (that is, arithmetic*, geometry, and rectilineal trigonometry) form the basis of the science of war, which is merely a science of combinations.

Every thing is here reduced to calculation, and computation of time and space; and every proposition is capable of demonstration. One movement gives rise to another, and every operation is followed by certain necessary consequences.

IT is by the assistance of geometry also that

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* "NOTHING amuses more harmlessly than computation," says Dr. Johnson with his usual force of remark, "and nothing is more often applicable to real business or speculative inquiries. A thousand stories which the ignorant hear and believe, die away when the computist takes them within his grasp. Numerical inquiries give entertainment in solitude by the practice, and reputation in public by the effect."

engineers conduct all their works, take the situation and plans of towns, the distances of places, and even of such things as are accessible only to the sight. This science is not only an introduction to fortification, but highly necessary to mechanics. On geometry likewise depends the theory of gunnery, mining, and drawing.

But besides the direct and immediate advantages to be derived from the application of geometrical principles to the movements of troops; the study of this science generally, is also the most ready means of acquiring that spirit of precision so useful to every one engaged in war. Without a knowledge of geometry, the ideas are commonly vague; and the mind is incapable of comparing and of judging, or calculating, but with difficulty.—An officer ought to be no less skilled in geography, the art of designing, the management of artillery, and the knowledge of fortification, if he is ambitious of qualifying himself for the variety of different situations and contingencies which daily present themselves in the operations of a campaign.

GEOGRAPHY points out the exact local situation of a country, and of its frontiers; its commerce, its navigation (if any) its rivers, and the great roads which traverse it. This study is

both easy and agreeable, and requires only common observation and memory.

Topography, or the description of a particular district, is that part of geography which is the most essential for an officer: but this study can only be pursued upon the spots themselves; unless, having been the theatre of former wars, history, or particular memoirs, may have given a minute account of them*.

DESIGN, or drawing, is the art of representing on paper the different situations of countries, the positions of ground and of posts, and the plans and outline of intrenchments. It also greatly facilitates those operations which require an exact local acquaintance with places.

YOU will receive regular instructions on the subjects of Gunnery and Fortification, but in the mean time I shall here present you with some loose ideas concerning those arts.

SOME persons assert, that we have nothing in the military art in common with the Romans, and that the invention of gunpowder has entirely changed the nature of war. This is not en-

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* A remark on the attention paid to this essential subject in the French armies, occurs below in LETTER XXXII.

tirely true:—our muskets (if we exclude the bayonet, which is the most formidable part of them) are merely weapons which strike at a distance, in nearly the same manner as the bow, the cross-bow, and the sling: and the principal advantages of the cannon over the *balista* and *catapulta** are, in its being a machine more simple, and that it shortens the duration of sieges: in other respects it has only an indirect influence on the art of war. It is chiefly on men that the invention of gunpowder has wrought such a change: in having led them to place a greater dependance on the power of the arms than on the energy of the soldier; and to esteem less that intrepidity, that bodily vigour, and those other natural endowments, which no mechanical acquisitions can supply.

Anciently it was rather the personal valour of

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* Machines employed by the Romans in their sieges. The former was for the purpose of throwing great stones, and the latter for casting the heavier sort of darts and spears. Some of these engines were so large, and of such force, that they would throw stones of a hundred weight. Josephus takes notice of the surprising effects of these engines; and says, that the stones thrown by them beat down battlements, and knocked off the angles of towers.

the soldier, than the ability of the general, which decided the issue of a battle. Cesar, considered with regard to his military achievements, is less worthy of admiration for the art evinced in his positions and his movements, than for the intrepidity and fearless courage with which he was able to inspire his soldiers*.

The battles of former times were much more sanguinary than modern ones; because the close impervious order of the troops necessarily en-

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* It is said of Archidamas, that when he first saw the machine called the *catapulta*, then recently brought from Sicily, he exclaimed: "This is the grave of valour."

The gallant knights also who first witnessed the introduction of fire arms in battle, were of the same opinion: it is even mentioned that the noble Bayard himself used to put to death, without mercy, all musketeers who fell into his hands, considering them to be the decided enemies of true personal courage.

Courage, as a moral virtue, or quality of the soul, (and it is only when considered as such that it deserves to be valued), consists in being able to face danger, and death itself, without terror or dismay, on necessary occasions. In this case however fire-arms, by reducing all men to the same level, in destroying the distinctions arising from different degrees of bodily strength, have not rendered personal valour of no avail, but have rather placed it in the brightest point of view.

gaged a greater number of combatants at once, and the moral energy of the ancient soldiers rendered the conflict long and dreadful. At present, all is finished when one army succeeds in turning the flank of another. But independently of that, firing does not kill so many as the weapons used by the ancients. Close combat rarely takes place, and is short in its duration, among the moderns, because they are not properly armed for that mode of fighting: the most sanguinary (though only to one of the two parties) is when the cavalry pursues, sword in hand, a routed infantry; between two bodies of men on foot, the form of the musket and the bayonet renders them more ridiculous than dangerous.

When once two armies among the ancients had come to a close engagement, it was almost impossible to effect a retreat with any degree of order. In opposition to this assertion, we cannot justly cite the retreat of the Ten Thousand, and a few others; which were owing entirely to the influence of particular circumstances, and cannot be regarded as exceptions. The ancients had not sufficient cavalry to protect their infantry when it was compelled to fly: besides, their cavalry could not effect any thing against the weapons used by the infantry.

When they fled, they were cut in pieces by soldiers who pursued them with proportionate velocity: the slaughter was dreadful. It was impossible to think of gaining a position, or of forming a new front; because they had no batteries, beneath the shelter of which they could be rallied, and put in order; and the enraged enemy would allow no time for such a manœuvre to take place. It was not every army among the ancients which possessed the noble generosity of the Lacedemonians; who, content with victory, never pursued a vanquished enemy.

Cannon were originally made of iron bars, soldered together, and fortified with strong iron hoops; some of which are still to be seen, viz. one in the Tower of London, two at Woolwich, and one in the royal arsenal at Lisbon. Others were made of thin sheets of iron rolled up together, and hooped; and on emergences they were made even of leather, with plates of iron or copper. These pieces were formed in a rude and imperfect manner, like the first essays of many new inventions. Stone balls were thrown out of these cannon; and only a small quantity of powder was used, on account of their weakness. These pieces have no ornaments, are placed on their carriages by rings, and are of a cylindrical

form. When or by whom they were made, is uncertain: however, we read of cannon being used as early as the thirteenth century, in a sea-engagement between the king of Tunis and the Moorish king of Seville. The Venetians used cannon at the siege of Claudia Jessa, now called Chioggia, in 1366; which were brought thither by two Germans, with some powder and leaden balls: as likewise in their wars with the Genoese in 1379. Our glorious king Edward the Third made use of cannon at the battle of Cressy in 1346, and at the siege of Calais in 1347. Cannon were used by the Turks at the siege of Constantinople, then in possession of the Christians, in 1394, or in that of 1452, that threw a weight of 500lb.; but they generally burst at either the first, second, or third shot. Louis the Twelfth had one cast at Tours of the same size, which threw a ball from the Bastille to Charenton, the distance of a league. One of these famous cannon was taken at the siege of Dieu, in 1546, by don John de Castro; and is now in the castle of St. Juiliaõ da Barra, ten miles from Lisbon: its length is 20 feet 7 inches, diameter at the centre 6 feet 3 inches, and it discharges a ball of 100lb. It has neither dolphins, rings, nor button; is of a curious kind of metal; and has a

large Indostan inscription upon it, which says it was cast in 1400.

"The artillery first framed," says a celebrated historian, "was so clumsy, and of such difficult management, that men were not immediately sensible of its use and efficacy; and even to the present times, improvements have been continually making in this furious engine, which, though it seemed contrived for the destruction of mankind and the overthrow of empires, has, in the issue, rendered battles less bloody, and has given greater stability to civil societies. Nations, by its means, have been brought more to a level; conquests have become less frequent and rapid; success in war has been reduced nearly to a matter of calculation; and any nation overmatched by its enemies, either yields to their demands, or secures itself by alliances against their violence and invasion."

It was in Germany that gunpowder and artillery were first fabricated; but it seems to have been in France, if we are to believe Villani, that this new invention was originally applied, on a great scale, to the purposes of war. According to him, our Edward the Third enjoys the honor of making the grand experiment at the battle of Cressy, within six years of the original discovery;

and here the few unshapely pieces of ordnance (destitute, in all probability, of both trunnions and wheels, and dangerous from their uncouth construction) which this enterprising prince placed in the front of his army, had a prodigious effect.

But though the dreadful effects of gunpowder were now manifested beyond a doubt, and had been applied successfully in the field of battle; yet, however obvious the principles, it was some time before the artillery was pointed against fortifications, and the newly-discovered force given to projectiles, applied to the subvervion of towns and castles. Even against these they at last acquired a decided superiority: for the art of gunnery was sooner improved than the science of fortification; and it is a well-established fact, that the mode of defence was much inferior to that of offence, till the days of Vauban and Coehorn.

The contest which took place in consequence of the expulsion of the house of Stuart and the elevation of the prince of Orange, gave a more warlike turn to the English nation; and produced considerable attention to tactics in general, and that branch in particular which concerns the management of artillery. During the victorious progress of the English army in the reign

of queen Anne, this subject must of course have occupied the attention of administration; but, so slow is the attainment of perfection in the military art, it fell infinitely short of the present establishment. Indeed cannon at that period were scarcely ever employed (at least those of any size) except in sieges, which were spun out to an inconceivable length. Battalion guns attached to the infantry, a late and admirable improvement, were unknown.

The park of artillery with which William the Third carried on the war in Flanders, and the victorious Marlborough penetrated into the interior of Germany, would now scarcely be deemed adequate for an army of ten thousand men. In addition to this, the pieces in use were unwieldy, difficult of management and conveyance, and totally unfit for those rapid evolutions which distinguish modern warfare.

THE knowledge of Artillery includes not only the use of fire-arms, but their force and power, their different modes of construction, their quality, and the means of applying them to the greatest advantage. I am fully persuaded that you will soon acquire all that is necessary in this branch. There are however some relative points connected with it, of which it would be disgrace-

ful in you to appear ignorant: I mean the comparative capacity and force of cannon and other fire-arms.

There are in cannon three species of discharges. The first is the discharge direct, or Point-blank; which is when the cannon is pointed immediately at the spot against which the ball is to be fired; and this is regulated by means of a wooden wedge, placed under the breeching of the gun and on the head of the carriage. The second is the Random-shot; this is, when a piece is fired with its breech merely on the carriage, without any additional or particular elevation, and thus describing in its length an angle of 45 degrees with the horizon. In this situation the ball is conveyed to the greatest possible distance; but as the piece cannot, thus mounted, be directed toward any determined point, it is not fired in this way except on a close body of men, or at places where the ball cannot fail to do execution. The third discharge is the *Ricochet* (called in English the duck-and-drake); invented by Vauban, and which consists in firing the cannon charged only with powder just sufficient to carry the ball along the façade or works attacked: when fired in this manner, the shot rolls and bounds along the ground during the whole

of its passage, and thus proves extremely mischievous.

The Point-blank or direct discharge may be reckoned at about 300 fathom. With regard to pieces fired at Random, and loaded with two-thirds of the weight of the ball, it appeared from experiments, that a piece with

24lb. ball, carried to 2250 fathom.
16 . . . . to 2020
12 . . . . to 1870
8 . . . . to 1660
4 . . . . to 1520.

The pieces of 24, 16, 12, and 8lb. ought to be loaded with only about a third of the weight of the ball, to produce the greatest effect of which they are capable; that is, in this proportion: a 24-pounder with nine pounds of powder, the 16 with six, the 12 with five, and the 8 with three. With respect to the 4-pounder, its suitable proportion has been found to be two pounds, or half the weight of its ball. This piece requires a stronger charge than the others in proportion to its ball, because its length is so much greater in proportion to the bore.

The quantity of powder required in the third species of discharge, or *ricochet*, is to be ascertained only by experiments in the particular

cases. With this view trial is to be made with different weights; and when the proportion required is found, this is continued.

In sieges, this last method is used with a very small quantity of powder, and a little elevation, so as just to fire over the parapet; and then the shot will roll along the opposite rampart, dismounting the cannon and dispersing or destroying the troops. The pieces are generally at about 300 feet before the first parallel; perpendicular to the faces produced, which they are to enfilade. Ricochet practice is not applicable to cannon alone: small mortars and howitzers may effectually be used for the same purpose, and are thus of singular use in action to enfilade the enemy's ranks; for when the men perceive the shells rolling and bouncing about with their fuses burning, expecting them to burst every moment, the bravest will hardly have courage to wait their approach, and face the horror of their explosion.

Ricochet firing is not confined to any particular charge or elevation: each must vary according to the distance, and difference of level, of the object to be fired at; and particularly of the spot on which it is intended for the shot to make the first bound. The smaller the angle is under which a shot is made to ricochet, the longer it

will preserve its force and have effect; as it will sink so much the less in the ground on which it bounds, and whose tenacity will of course present so much less resistance to its progress. In the ricochet of a fortification of any kind, the angle of elevation should seldom be less than 10 degrees, to throw the shot over a parapet a little higher than the level of the battery. If the works are of an extraordinary height, the piece must be removed to such a situation, and have such charge, that it can still attain its object at this elevation, or at least under that of 13 or 14 degrees, otherwise the shot will not ricochet, and the carriages will suffer very much. The first gun in a ricochet battery should be so placed as to sweep the whole length of the rampart of the enemy's work, at three or four feet from the parapet; and the rest should form as small an angle with the parapet as possible. For this purpose the guns should be pointed about four fathoms from the face of the work toward the interior.

In the ricochet of ordnance in the field, the objects to be fired at being principally infantry and cavalry, the guns should seldom be elevated above three degrees; as with greater angles the ball would be apt to bound too high, and de-

feat the object intended. This sort of firing is generally practised along the whole extent of a face or flank.

The celebrated marshal Vauban first invented the mode of firing ricochet shots. He tried the experiment at the siege of Ath, in 1679.

St. Remy has proved that a 24-pounder may be fired from 90 to 100 or even 120 times in twenty-four hours. Care must be taken however to let the piece cool after every ten or twelve times.

In firing a number of times, and in quick succession, with the same cannon; when it is perceived that the metal begins to be heated, it is necessary to diminish the charge: because in this state it is incapable of so much resistance, and hence the usual charges might give a dangerous shock. It has been said to be proved by experience, that the capacity of cannon is greater in the morning and evening than at noon, and in cool weather than in hot. The reason assigned for this is, that at the former periods the air, being less heated, occasions a much less expansion of the powder; the effort of which being, as it were, more united and concentrated, will become more powerful.

In order to ascertain the capacity of fire-arms,

it is necessary to consider first the line of sight; that is, a right line from the eye to the object aimed at; secondly the line of fire; another right line, in the direction of the length of the piece: and thirdly the trajectoral line, or that which is produced by the effect of the powder. Officers who are but superficially informed of the construction of fire-arms, suppose that the line of sight and the line of fire are parallel: not considering that if they were so, the ball would always fall below its mark; because every instant from its having passed the bore of the gun, it leaves the line of fire, and gradually tends towards the earth, according to the laws of gravitation. The line of fire and that of sight, instead of being parallel, form an angle more or less sensible, according to the thickness of the piece at its breeching, and at its opposite extremity.

The ball, after passing the muzzle, describes a curve. This curved line first intersects the line of sight at a small distance from the mouth of the piece, passes above it, and thence (inclining to the earth by gravitation) repasses this line, and intersects it a second time; thus describing a parabola till the time of its fall. This second point of intersection is called, the capacity of a gun in a point-blank fire; and is more

or less distant from the extremity of the piece, in proportion to the enlargement of the angle formed by the line of sight and the line of fire.

It has been proved by experiment, that in a cannon loaded with ball, and powder in proportion, the ball, following its trajectoral path, will be found, at the distance of sixty fathoms, elevated above the line of sight about two feet, which will be its greatest elevation; and that at 120 fathoms, it will again intersect this line in continuing to describe its curve toward the earth.

I have said that the ball is elevated above the line of sight at the distance of 60 fathoms. Officers who are not sufficiently acquainted with the nature of fire-arms, say that the shot always rises; and in consequence order their men discriminately, and at whatever distance they may be from the enemy, to take aim toward the centre of the body, or to *fire low*. They do not consider, that it is impossible to hit any mark whatever, when the aim is taken at two feet below it, at any given distance; and if the aim be taken at the lower extremity of an object, it can never at any distance be hit higher than two feet above that extremity. If an object six feet high is placed at the distance of 100 fathoms, and aim

is taken at two feet above its base, the ball will lodge in its centre, or at the height of three feet; and if at 60 fathoms, the mark will be struck at the height of four feet. But if the distance of the mark exceeds 120 fathoms, the aim must necessarily be taken higher than the mark, to hit its intermediate dimension; and the elevation must be thus increased in proportion to the distance from the mark. For instance:—orders are given to take aim at the height of the standard-heads, when the enemy is at the distance of 300 fathoms; at the height of the halberd-heads, when at 200; at the hats, at 140; at the knees, at 60; and never beneath this mark.

The capacity of the firelocks of our infantry, in a direction nearly horizontal, is about 180 fathoms. Hence in the construction of defensive posts, between 120 and 140 fathoms has been fixed on for the distance of the line of defence, from the flank to the angle flanked. But though the horizontal capacity of the musket has been estimated at 180 fathoms, it is seldom that the fire of the infantry begins to have a powerful effect beyond 80 fathoms.

From the study of the artillery, it is proper to proceed to that of Fortification.

Whoever has been in North America, may

have seen fortification in its infancy. There are abundance of Indian villages fenced round by long stakes driven into the ground, with moss or earth to fill the intervals; and this is their security (together with their own vigilance) against the cruelty of the savage neighbouring nations.

Nor is fortification much less ancient than mankind: for Cain, the son of Adam, built a city with a wall round it on mount Liban, and called it after the name of his son Enoch, the ruins of which, it is said, are to be seen at this day; and the Babylonians, soon after the Deluge, built cities and encompassed them with strong walls.

At first, people thought themselves secure with a single wall, behind which they made use of their darts and arrows with safety; but as new warlike instruments were continually invented to destroy these feeble structures, so on the other hand persons acting on the defensive were obliged to build stronger, to resist the contrivances of the desperate assailants.

What improvements they made in strengthening their walls many ages ago, appear from history. The first walls we read of, and which were erected by Cain, were of brick; and the

ancient Grecians, long before the building of Rome, used brick and rubble-stone, with which they constructed a vast wall, joining mount Hymetus to the city of Athens. The Babylonian walls built by Semiramis (or, as others insist, by Belus) were 32 feet thick, and 100 feet high, with towers of 10 feet built upon them; and were cemented with butimen or asphaltus. Those of Jerusalem seem to have been of nearly equal dimensions; since, in the siege by Titus, all the Roman battering-rams, joined with Roman art and courage, could remove but four stones out of the tower of Antonia in a whole night's assault.

After fortification had arrived at this point, it stopped for many ages, till the use of gunpowder and guns was discovered: and then the round and square towers, which were very good flanks against bows and arrows, became but indifferent ones against the violence of cannon; nor did the battlements any longer offer a shelter, when the force of one shot both overset the battlement, and destroyed those who sought security in it.

Modern fortification turned the walls into ramparts; and the square and round towers into bastions, defended by numerous outworks: all

which were made so solid, that they could not be beaten down but by the continual fire of several batteries of cannon. These bastions at first were but small, their gorges narrow, and their flanks and faces short and at great distance from each other; as are those now to be seen in the city of Antwerp, built in 1540, by Charles the Fifth emperor of Germany; but since that time they have been greatly improved and enlarged; and are now arrived to such a degree of strength, that it is supposed the art of fortification is nearly at its highest degree of perfection.

During the attack on Naples by Gonsalvo the Spanish general, in the year 1503, an event took place which has occasioned very important changes in the art of war. The French garrison, being but inconsiderable, and having no confidence in the assistance of the inhabitants, abandoned the town itself, retiring into the new castle and the castle Del Ovo. The first having been carried by assault, Gonsalvo summoned the other to surrender; and was answered by Chavagnai, the French commandant, that he and his men were determined to resist to the utmost, and to bury themselves in the ruins of the place. This in fact happened much sooner than was expected: for Peter Navarro, the Spanish officer

who commanded the attack, having dug under a part of the wall without being observed, sprung the mine, and blew a number of the garrison into the air. The Spaniards immediately entered by the breach, and put every man within the castle to the sword.

It appears that it was at the taking of these castles that mines (such as they are constructed in modern war) were first used. In all periods of antiquity it was common to mine (or rather to sap) walls in time of siege; but that operation consisted only in digging under a tower, for instance, and substituting strong beams of timber, in proportion as the stones of the walls were removed, in order to support the tower. When this was performed, the beams and posts were covered over with pitch and other combustible substances. Fire was then applied to them; and as they were consumed and gave way, the walls and tower fell, and filling up the ditch, presented a practicable breach by which the besiegers might enter the place. It is not known however that till this siege of Naples, gunpowder had ever been employed in mines. It is indeed said that, about the year 1487, when the Genoese were besieging Seresanella, a place belong-to the Florentines, one of their engineers made

use of powder in mining under the castle; but the attempt not having been attended with success, the experiment was not repeated. Peter Navarro was at that time in the Genoese service; and having reflected much on the subject, he brought the application of gunpowder for the purpose of mines to such perfection, as to produce the effects just described in the castle Del Ovo, and thus put the Spaniards in possession of the capital of the kingdom.

The knowledge of fortification points out the methods of attacking and defending places; of intrenching a camp, a position, or post; of distinguishing the different sorts of intrenchments, their strong and weak parts; to judge of their disposition, their construction, and their situations, so as to be enabled to take the most proper measures for attacking or defending them: it teaches to judge of the accessible sides of any position; whether from the disadvantageous nature of the ground, from the bad distribution of the troops, or its natural incapacity of defence.

"It is greatly to be desired," says a skilful engineer, "that every officer would at least apply so much of his time to the study of fortification, as to acquire a certain degree of knowledge of the attack and defence of places. This

would render him much more qualified for important commands; for there must necessarily occur a thousand instances in war, in which an officer is called to the attack or defence of a post; and it cannot be doubted, that he who shall have gained some insight into this art, will be able to acquit himself with greater credit and reputation than he who shall have totally neglected it from the foolish persuasion that bravery alone will accomplish every thing."

THE acquirements which ought to follow those I have already enumerated, are the Languages, Style, History, and Politics.

LETTER XXII.

ON THE UTILITY OF AN ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE LANGUAGES, HISTORY, AND POLITICS.

ALL languages are not of equal importance. Life is so short, that in regard to study, whatever is not useful may in some views be considered as pernicious. The principles of the Latin language are of the highest utility. This contributes likewise much to the knowledge of the French; which, being now the language of all Europe, ought to be acquired in its utmost perfection.

With regard to the other languages, an officer ought certainly to endeavour to render himself master of that of the country where he is about to make war; for without this knowledge he will be constantly liable to commit the greatest faults. It will not otherwise be in his power to communicate with the inhabitants; he cannot employ the best spies: and he will be compelled, on the most delicate and important oc-

casions, to make use of interpreters, without whom he cannot stir a single step, and who perhaps seek every opportunity to betray him. It is truly astonishing that most parents who destine a young man to the profession of arms, instead of having him taught the modern European languages, prefer his consuming the greater part of his youth in acquiring the Greek and Latin. Not, as I have already observed, but Latin may be highly useful for an officer, as there are few countries where this language is not known, and in the most distant parts, it may often supply the want of the vernacular tongue. But I cannot forbear declaring against the custom of universities and colleges, in causing a youth to waste five or six of the most valuable years of his life on learning an idiom which he might acquire in two or three by another method.

Precision, energy, and simplicity, of Style, are important acquisitions for a military man; who ought to know how to express himself with neatness, as well by writing as verbally. It may be very possible to plan with skill a military operation; but this has sometimes been known to miscarry from the orders having been confusedly given, and thus misapprehended. You ought

therefore to accustom yourself betimes to attempt at writing with purity and precision*.

ON HISTORY AND POLITICS.

HISTORY is the guide of all policy. In this study dates and facts are not the object of the first importance. "The knowledge of history," says a polite writer, "gives us an insight into futurity; by instructing us of what will be, from what has already been. What has occurred in the world that is great, surprising, or marvellous, in the ages that are past, may happen again in those that are to succeed."

POLITICS is the art of governing a state, and of directing its public concerns: it comprises, of course, a knowledge of the relative situations and interests of other powers. This ought to be studied by an officer as a science immediately connected with that of war.

* OF the numerous works which have been published on the subject of style, a very useful one is The Elements of English Composition, by Mr. Irving; but by far the most entertaining and instructive is, the late Dr. Gregory's recent Letters on Literature, Taste, and Composition, addressed to his Son.

History and geography are the basis of politics. Geography, in all that relates to topographical part, is of easy acquisition; but it must be also acquired in a political view, which is an attainment of more difficulty. In history, though a study of the most extensive nature, a taste for reading, a well chosen selection of books, a methodical attention, and the constant habit of transcribing extracts, will enable you to make rapid progress*. You may leave to antiquaries the task of dispelling the cloud in which much of ancient history is enveloped: however useful their researches for throwing light on certain facts, the officer needs only a slight survey of these dark periods.

The study of the history of Europe is the first which ought to engage your attention. After having obtained a general idea of the times ante-

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* The English Universal History in sixty-six large volumes, must be acknowledged to be too bulky to find a place in an officer's closet or marquee; besides, that it does not include the recent events which have produced so important changes in the whole political system of Europe. Dr. Mavor's New Universal History, in twenty-five *pocket* volumes, is well adapted to supply the benefits of much more voluminous and extensive researches.

rior to that of the emperor Charles the Fifth, you will commence your inquiries at that era. You will then, in the history of each people, fix on that epoch which has had the greatest influence in placing them in their present situation; paying particular attention to your own country, to comprehend its immediate relation with its allies, and thence successively with all other nations.

Your interest and your attention ought to be redoubled as you approach our own time. It is at the epoch of the Thirty Years war that modern history becomes truly interesting; for it was then that all the ideas and political combinations originated, which afterward moved and agitated Europe. From that time the history of every war, and every treaty of peace, requires as much attention as may have been given to a whole age preceding the seventeenth century. In reading the history of these wars, it will be proper to observe the changes which the different periods have produced in military tactics; to look over attentively the narratives of the campaigns of the great generals, and the memoirs of contemporary authors. At every treaty of peace likewise, it will be necessary to examine the revolutions which it may have occasioned in Europe,

the new interests they have produced, and the negotiations to which they may have given rise*. The whole object will be, in short, to learn how the different tempers of men are managed; and how those great and secret springs of politics are moved, which are often as decisive as the most important victories.

One of the principal purposes, indeed, in the study of history, is the knowledge of the characters and the passions of men: these we must also study in the world at large, among the persons about us, and among those who govern and who command. Nature is every where the same; men are always influenced by the same passions, and these invariably produce the same effects. We must endeavour to pierce the exterior which covers them, and to develope their most secret detail and operations. The knowledge of men, as well as that of countries, is acquired by prac-

* The important history of the late war has been copiously and impartially given by Mr. Stephens, in his "History of the Wars which arose out of the French Revolution." The operations in Egypt have been more particularly described by sir Robert Wilson; by Dr. Wittman, in his Travels in Turkey, Syria, and Egypt, in company with the British Military Mission; as well as by some other officers.

tice; and habit, in this also, gives a wonderful facility to those who have devoted their attention to it.

When you have attained a competent knowledge of the history of Europe, trace its genealogical and political memoirs: examine the force of each state; the opposite interests of governments, and of those who direct them; the family-alliances, the commerce, and reciprocal ties, of one nation with another. From this political exterior of different states, proceed to consider their interior arrangements, beginning with your own country and those nations which are more immediately connected with it. In this investigation, direct much of your attention, and with a mind free from prejudices, to those great and powerful bodies denominated governments; observe their organization, their principles, their springs of action, and occasions of languor, of strength, or of weakness. Wealth is the life-blood of the state, and agriculture is the source of wealth: but it is the activity of commerce, the collection of taxes, the reflux of the produce of these taxes among the people by means of the expenditures of administration; in short, it is the combination of all these sources of circulation, that constitutes the vigour and the health of the

body politic. Without this, riches, being stagnant in one quarter, become fatal by their very abundance, and paralyze part of the society. Without agriculture, there is no solid wealth. Without commerce, agriculture sinks into inaction. Industry and the arts are the soul of commerce. Thus all are linked together in the political chain: and as in the animal system, so in this likewise, each member corresponds with its fellow; and the inquiries of an enlightened statesman are to a government, what the researches of the anatomist are to the human body.

KNOWLEDGE so extensive is to be acquired but slowly; it is not difficult however to attain it by constant attention and observation, at the period of life when there is ample time for such objects. For it must be remembered, that at the age of maturity men are called to *act* in the great affairs of life; and the season of youth is sufficiently long for preparation, to those who employ it in its proper duties. An active curiosity, which engages itself upon every thing around it, resting chiefly on those objects that are connected with the plan of study it is pursuing, will by this means acquire a vast portion of information. In whatever foreign country or town you are posted, study its commerce, its government,

and the genius and manners of its inhabitants. Act as if you were dispatched thither commissioned to give an account of these particulars to your own government. Make your inquiries of strangers and travellers; associate with persons who are well-informed; never neglect till to-morrow the intelligence you might have acquired to-day; and examine yourself every evening as to the fresh information which you have obtained.

LETTER XXIII.

ON ACQUIRING THE COUP-D'ŒIL*.

THE military *coup-d'œil* is the art of ascertaining at one view the nature, as well as the different situations of the countries where we are engaged in war; to know the advantages and disadvantages of camps and posts that we intend to occupy, and of those which the enemy may make choice of. His own position, that of the enemy, and an acquaintance with the circumjacent countries, supply the enlightened officer with conjectures sufficiently accurate to enable him to penetrate into the immediate designs of the two armies, and those even which subsequent events may induce them to undertake. It is only by means of this complete knowledge of the country which is the seat of war, that a general can foresee, and as it were make himself master of, the events of a campaign; for, anticipating the ef-

* A French military term, nearly answering in English to *glance of the eye*.

fects which his own measures will have upon the operations of the enemy, and making this result the basis of his future plans, he forces them from camp to camp, and from post to post, till he at length obtains the advantage he had proposed. Such, in a few words, is the military *coup-d'œil*, without which it is impossible that a general can avoid falling into the most fatal mistakes.

It seems to be a general persuasion, that the important talent of the *coup-d'œil* does not depend on ourselves, but is conferred by nature; and that unless given us at our birth, the most assiduous practice and the clearest perspicuity will be insufficient for its acquisition. "This," says an eminent military writer, "is an illusion. We all possess it, more or less, in proportion to our quantity of intellect and good-sense. It is the natural offspring of these; though it may be greatly improved by application, and will be confirmed by experience."

As in every science, experience is essential to acquire it in all its branches,—the science of war being the most important in regard to its object, and embracing a wider range than all the rest, necessarily requires a longer practice, and more deliberate consideration and reflection.

But as I have already observed*, experience and practice serving only to perfect the theory, would of themselves be incomplete, if the study of the principles were not attended to; a century of experience only, would be insufficient. It must be allowed however that marches, foraging, the different position of camps, in short all the practical operations of war, are of importance in forming the *coup-d'œil*, and in producing those reflections on the nature of a country, which are of so much utility to a military man. An officer who follows his profession with spirit and devotedness, will in his travels, in his walks, and in the chace, view every object with a military eye: he will be disposing troops, contrasting his own movements with those of the enemy, reducing his principles to practice, taking advantage of the ground, and, in a word, applying his profession to whatever he may chance to be engaged in†.

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* Letter xx.

† Mr. Holcroft, in his Travels, relates an anecdote of Buonaparte, which exhibits in more than one view the character of the man:—

After the revolution of the 9th of November 1799 had established Buonaparte in the first-consulship, he visited the different royal palaces to make choice of his

PHILOPŒMEN, one of the greatest of the Grecian captains, and whom an illustrious Roman writer calls the last of the Greeks, possessed this talent in its utmost extent: and it must not be considered in him as solely the gift of nature, but the fruit also of study, of application, and of an extreme love of his art. When he was on a journey, and happened to meet with a spot which it was difficult to pass, he turned his eyes on all sides, to examine the nature of the post; then, if he was alone, he asked himself, or, if in company, he questioned those about him: "If the enemy shewed themselves at this spot, and were to attack us, in front, on either flank, or in the rear, what should we do? What would be the most advantageous order of battle? What number of troops would be sufficient? Where should we dispose of our baggage and useless people? Would it be more to our advantage to advance, or to retreat? Would it be proper to encamp: and in that case, what quantity of ground ought we to occupy; and whence could we conveniently procure water, wood, and forage? In decamping, which would be the safest

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residence. When he came to that of the Thuilleries, "I will live here," said he;—"it is a good military post."

route, and in what order should we march?" In the pursuits of the chace, or in riding over a country, with views like these, the time is so far from being thrown away, that it may be truly affirmed, more knowledge is acquired than in reading whole volumes of dull and insipid matter.

HUNTING contributes exceedingly to perfecting the *coup-d'œil*, by familiarizing us with the variety of countries. It teaches us many things connected with war, insensibly as it were, and thus may be considered as one auxiliary in bestowing upon us some of the most valuable qualities for a general. Cyrus, in giving up himself entirely to the pursuits of the chace during his youth, had less in view his personal gratification and pleasures, than the design of qualifying himself for the command of armies.

"THE distinct knowledge of one country directs us to that of another," says Machiavel. "Those who are not habituated to such examination, have great difficulty in acquiring it; while others perceive at one view the extent of a plain, the height of a mountain, the size and limits of a valley, and all the circumstances of the different character and nature of the ground;

for which they are wholly indebted to their former experience and observation."

WOULD you form to yourself a *coup-d'œil?* As soon as you are encamped, examine with attention, alone, and in your tent, the map of the country where you are, and the post you occupy. Consider also that on which the enemy is encamped:—whether the two armies cover their respective posts; whether the line of communication is well maintained, and if one can seize upon an important point more easily than the other; whether the wings are secured, and the manner in which they are supported:—whether one army can gain the route which the other wishes to follow; the obstacles it may have to encounter in its march; the time necessary for them to come to you, or for you to reach them: —whence each party draws its subsistence; whether you can intercept the enemy's convoys, or they are able to cut off yours:—if you make a certain movement on your right or left, whither it will lead you; to what quarter you shall go yourself if the enemy should take this step before you, or should unexpectedly change his encampment. You will find nothing more instructive than this kind of exercise, and nothing

tends more to improve the mind and the judgment; it is, in a word, the elements of military logic.

AFTER having thus well considered the map, which gives at best only an indistinct idea (for a map can give no more than the bare idea of a country), you must not fail to reconnoitre those situations upon which you had been speculating. You must begin by learning fully the general position of the camp, and the whole of the ground which the army occupies; its advantages, and its disadvantages. Hence you will proceed to the field of battle. At first take a general survey of it; and afterward examine it more in detail, minutely and by parts. Notice how the wings are defended: if by a river, observe carefully its banks, whether its bottom be solid or boggy; whether it is every where fordable, or in certain places only; and if the former, you may deem it a weak and bad defence. Then observe the ground beyond it; whether it be covered, or bare and naked; whether there are any high grounds which command the camp; and whether it be necessary to form a lodgment there to cover yourself on that side,—or, in case of necessity, the enemy can be driven from that quarter. If it be a marsh that covers this wing, take care to exa-

mine it, and to try the bottom; and do not fail to inform yourself from the country people, whether it be possible to increase the water so as to render the situation more inaccessible.

THENCE pass to the left. If this be defended by a village, you must immediately go round it to reconnoitre it, with all possible precision: you must examine the houses in the suburbs; of what they are formed; whether of stone, wood, or brick; and whether any of them are such as the enemy might advantageously occupy: whether it is necessary to fortify the village, and the houses: whether the church be strong, or the church-yard walled, and capable of defence; and if so, how many men it will contain: whether the village be not commanded by some high ground; and if so, whether this may be possessed or carried; and in your imagination form the attack and defence of this spot.

AFTER having deliberately examined in this manner, and written down your observations on each wing, trace the whole front of the field of battle in the same way. If the army be encamped according to the usual method, the cavalry on the wings and the infantry in the centre, examine the ground in front of the former: whether it be adapted to this disposition; whether it

is open, and consists of a plain sufficiently spacious for the wing of the cavalry. You must not stop here, but proceed to observe the ground beyond, which the enemy might attempt to occupy; for the position of the one ought to regulate and govern the precautions and regulations for the other. If the enemy whom you wish to engage, or by whom you expect to be attacked, has behind him ground of a different nature, and favourable for infantry, it is easy to judge from the common reasonings and rules of war, that should his cavalry be driven back as far as the covered positions in his rear, your own will not be able to pursue its advantages further, but will be repulsed by the infantry which the enemy will have posted in these positions to support his cavalry. This observation ought to convince you of the necessity of supporting this wing by a line of infantry. If your ground is similar to that of the enemy, you will find that your general must have committed a fault in stationing his cavalry where he ought to have placed the infantry; and that whether he be attacked, or be himself the assailant, he will be obliged to replace one part of his troops by another, and to make a number of such movements as are always dangerous in the face of an enemy.

HAVING thoroughly examined the whole of the ground in the front of this wing, proceed towards the infantry, which are supposed to be posted in the centre. Observe the ground here; and notice whether there be any parts of it uneven, or intersected with objects that might favour the operations of the infantry, and enable them to act with greater effect in support of the cavalry. If you should discern any conspicuous and important variations in the ground (such as a mixture of plains and inclosed fields, or of houses), whether on one side or the other, but especially in the front of the infantry, examine these with attention; and should you deem them situations easily tenable, do not fail to fortify them. If in advancing again to the left, and to the river which covers that quarter, you perceive that the country is naked and open, and fit for the movements of cavalry, you may conclude that the position is well chosen according to the usual method. Observe whether the banks of the river be bordered with hedges, or thickets; and whether the opposite side be the same: in this case you will see that the enemy may lodge a body of infantry there, and direct their fire against this wing. It will then be right to en-

deavour to deprive him of this advantage, by destroying these hedges or trees.

After having made all these preliminary observations, you must retire into your tent, and deliberate maturely upon what you have remarked, and form in your imagination the order of battle. On the succeeding day mount your horse, and reconnoitre the ground you occupy in all directions: inform yourself of the name of the villages, and principal houses; observe the roads and the rivers, the woods, marshes, and high grounds: in short, suffer nothing to escape you; and consider well every thing that may be favourable or disadvantageous to the enemy in case of his attacking you, or of your marching against him. Then reflect whether a better position might not have been chosen for your own army.

If the army decamps and puts itself in motion, examine the order of the columns, the countries they traverse, and, as accurately as possible, the relative distances of these. Then ask yourself, If the enemy, by a secret and forced march, were suddenly to fall upon us, what should we do? Supposing a column of cavalry engaged in a country intersected with defiles, and where it was incapable of acting, and the enemy should oppose his infantry to it, what step in such a

case must be taken, and how shall they be rescued from so dangerous a situation, and removed to a spot where they may be not only secure but useful? Is it desirable, in marching, to mix the infantry with the cavalry, so that the one may never appear without the other, and by that means be prepared for every event that may arise?

SUCH are the means which an officer may employ in actual service, for acquiring the inestimable advantage of the *coup-d'œil.*

THUS you may perceive how the experience of a campaign, and even the diversion of hunting, may be made subservient to this important acquisition; but as war is not of constant continuance, and as not every person is a statesman, travelling offers a third method not less fruitful in instruction. When you travel therefore, examine, as you go along, the whole line of ground. Imagine, for instance, an army encamped on the ground immediately before you: consider the advantages and disadvantages of the position: observe what is favourable for cavalry, and what for infantry. By continuing to do the same with the country beyond, you may form the idea of an actual battle; put into exercise all your knowledge of tactics and of stra-

tagems; instruct or improve yourself in the *coup-d'œil*, and render the country familiar to you; and thus become enabled to avail yourself of all the accidental benefits which it may offer.

LETTER XXIV.

PLAN OF STUDY.

THERE are still two important articles for me to speak of: the employment of your time; and the means of improving your memory.—The best method of employing your time profitably, is to form an uniform and systematical plan of life, to assign to each particular pursuit its destined hours, and if possible, to suffer nothing to derange this order. I would not recommend you at the beginning, to fatigue your mind with application and study; but to habituate yourself to it by degrees. The desire of instruction springs from instruction itself: study then becomes necessary to us, and is a pleasing resource for those hours when we wish to retire from the vexations of the world;—and such hours are far from unfrequent, even in a life of the greatest dissipation.

THE first years that a young man passes in the service, are the most proper to form and to pursue his plan of study, and in which he ought to acquire habits of activity and application. He should avail himself of this valuable season, for

gaining the elements of geometry, tactics, fortification, geography, history and the languages; as there will be no opportunity for these pursuits when he has attained to the superior ranks. When advanced to command, and raised to a situation in which extensive duties are required, there is no longer time to attend to such studies, and he will have constant occasions of regret and shame at having omitted the earlier acquisition of them. Even the officer however who has attained elevated rank, is still called to increase his knowledge: but the difference is, that in this situation study can be pursued only upon the foundation of what has been already learnt; and it is now too late for acquiring the elements.

THE excellent education which the younger Scipio had received, under his father Paulus Æmilius, and from the instructions of Polybius, perfectly qualified him to fill his vacant hours with advantage, and afterward to support the leisure of a retired life with pleasure and dignity. "Nobody," says a valuable historian, "knew better how to mingle leisure and action, or to employ the intervals of public business with more elegance and taste. Divided between arms and the muses, between the military labours of the camp and the peaceful speculations of the closet,

he either exercised his body in the perilous fatigues of war, or his mind in the study of the sciences."

PERSONS of indolent and inactive temper commonly impute to the defect of their memory the ignorance that disgraces them. This alleged obstacle to the acquisition of knowledge however, is only the pretext of their idleness. Memory is a quality with which all men are endowed from their birth, and it is unfolded and strengthened by exercise*.

THE best method of cultivating and improving the memory, is to contract a habit of application; to exercise it continually; to reflect every day on the objects upon which you have been employed on the day previous; to study for an hour or two before you go to bed, and recal the subject when you wake in the morning: thus by degrees that memory will be improved, which was only charged with incapacity because it had never been cultivated. But a desultory perusal of books will be of little benefit, if we suffer an intermission of several days, or the dissipation

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* CYRUS knew the names of all his soldiers; and Scipio is said to have retained in his memory the names of all the citizens of Rome.

and interruptions of the world, continually to break in upon our studies; and he who reads in this way ought not to be surprised, if he should forget every thing as fast as he learns it.

IF it should happen that the memory is really treacherous to a young man who is solicitous to improve himself, there are various artificial methods of helping it, and assisting its operations. The practice of interlining or marking the margin of the books perused, with a pencil, at those passages which are the most striking, or which have given rise to particular reflections, has been found very useful. But what I would especially recommend is, to make a sort of analysis of the works which you read; and to comment, and even to enter into something of the nature of a critical examination, upon such as seem to admit of it. These extracts and reflections should be carefully arranged under their respective heads, so as to form a complete disquisition or treatise on the various objects of study. By these means the marginal notes will, in the first instance, fix the eye on the most interesting passages; and then, by referring to the extracts, the reflections and thoughts to which these passages gave rise will be immediately found.

I NEED not enlarge on the utility of which

these extracts may prove in the course of life, on the inexpressible interest which this practice gives to study, or on the pleasing sentiments with which the student retraces the steps he has thus trod. There are few higher gratifications than those which attend successful labour; and the scholar exults in his progress, as much as the peasant in his harvest.

NOTWITHSTANDING what I have said on application and study, I beg you to bear in mind, that I would on no account have you neglect the qualities and accomplishments useful in the intercourse of the world, and what may be termed the moral part of education. Politeness, mildness, amenity of disposition, and the art of gaining the affections of others (qualities which are so essential to all who aim at stations of command) are only to be acquired in youth, by constant care, and the most vigilant attention to those models in which we remark them*.

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* AN edition of the incomparable Letters of Lord Chesterfield, freed from the many objectionable passages with which the originals were unfortunately interspersed, was published by Dr. Gregory, under the title of The Elements of Polite Education, in a small neat volume, containing a fund of amusement and information on a va-

To recapitulate the plan of study which I have recommended.—The hours of a young man just entering the service are highly precious. It is not necessary that these should be spent in the study of all the branches of the mathematics: those only may be pursued which are the more indispensable; such as arithmetic, the elements of geometry, rectilineal trigonometry, and a general idea of spherical trigonometry and mechanics. He may then proceed to the study of fortification and artillery. Two years of application under skilful masters, will be sufficient for these acquisitions; especially at a more advanced age than that at which the mind is so much disgusted and fatigued by the dry and elementary parts, and makes with pain every step in the progress from one truth to another.

HAVING acquired the method of resolving the trigonometrical problems, the path becomes more smooth and easy. To draw a plan, to reconnoitre a country, a position, or a place, and to exhibit and represent its relative situation, will be no longer difficult: and to be able to do this in a manner sufficiently clear for your own pur-

riety of important and interesting topics, as well as of moral and elegant instruction.

pose, as well as for the information of others, is all that is requisite in those who are not intended for professional engineers.

THE study of the interior details of discipline and exercise will follow that of the mathematics; but these important points I shall hereafter make the subjects of separate letters*. These details, which it is important to know (the ignorance of which is dangerous, while too great an attention to them equally discovers weakness), are easily acquired by daily practice and reflection. The knowledge of the manœuvres gives to an officer clear and distinct ideas of all the different operations; and the daily exhibition of these in the field before his eyes, accustoms him to that promptitude which is so essential in the day of battle.

A PERFECTION in the manœuvres can only be acquired by continual exercise. "The beginnings are aukward and clumsy," says a military writer: "quickness and precision are the effect of practice, till at length the movements become as regular as those of a machine. The musician who begins to play upon an instrument, can scarcely tell at first where to place his fingers;

* LETTERS XXV. and XXXI.

but soon accustoming himself to know the notes and the touches, he at last unites quickness and correctness of execution."

As soon as this stage of improvement is attained, tactics will be comparatively easy: a progress in the mathematics will enlarge the mind, which will then gradually embrace the different objects in a more extended view. This is the period when the young officer must begin to turn his attention to the geometry of tactics, to the mechanism of the manœuvres, and to the different systems which have been adopted and pursued by military men; and at every step of his advancement he will gain new light on the objects of his pursuit.

It is at this critical point of his career, that his mind must be kept in constant employment: he ought then to traverse the country, to make drawings of the different sites, to accustom his eye to distances, and his memory to incidents of daily occurrence; to draw up memorials and plans; in a word, to resemble Philopœmen, who thought of his profession on all occasions, whether walking, or hunting, or travelling, and wherever he saw ground on which his art could be exercised or applied.

I will here add a few words on the sub-

ject of general reading, and the choice of books. I beg then that every moment you can spare from your duties, your necessary occupations and amusements, may be devoted to reading. This will be to you indeed, I hope, itself a great pleasure. "Letters," says Cicero, "ennoble the character of youth, and are the charm of advanced age; they give an additional grace to prosperity, and adversity receives from them her sweetest consolations. In our own houses, in those of others, in travelling, in solitude, in all seasons, and in all places, they are the greatest charm and solace of our lives*."

Books were held in such high esteem by the ancients, that it was an article of advice given to Ptolemy, king of Egypt, to furnish his library with all kinds of books relating to the government of a state, and the command of an army; "that in reading them," said his counsellors, "you may find what no one will dare to tell you, and what you would be ashamed otherwise to learn."

* "*Adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant; secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent; delectantur domi, non impediunt foris; pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.*"

SANTA-CRUZ, in his Military Reflections, exhorts very strongly to the practice of reading; and quotes the example of Alexander, who always carried about with him the works of Homer, which he used to call a summary of all military discipline, and of valiant actions. Charles the Twelfth, guided by the same principle, never marched without the history of Alexander, by Quintus Curtius, in his pocket.

THE most instructive of all reading, is perhaps the lives of famous commanders, ancient and modern. In every individual of these, you will discover some faults; and such discovery is one of the best uses that can be made of history: "for the detection of one error," says a celebrated general, "is the disclosure of a rock that may be more easily avoided than if we had not been before apprised of it."

EXCLUSIVE of works on every point of military history and tactics, those on general history and geography demand your utmost attention; and particularly such as describe the *present* state of politics and manners in the European nations. The best books in all these different branches will be readily recommended to you by your present situation and connections: it will be necessary for you to confine yourself to such only

as impart solid instruction, and are of real utility; and all books, as well as studies, which do not tend to these points, I would have you most carefully avoid. When engaged in a profession so important as yours, it is highly unbecoming to bestow on any thing that is not immediately connected with it, any more than the superfluity of your time. In this view much useless reading may be saved, by an attentive perusal of the Complete Military Library, a work which has been patronized by the best-informed officers of the British army. This work unites, to valuable papers — the most essential branches and details of the art of war, extracted from the continental writers, whatever is more particularly applicable to our own service; and besides the ample body of instruction and amusement which it at once affords, will be perpetually useful as a book of general reference.

I HAVE lately seen in a periodical work, a Letter of general Wolfe, on the course of study and reading best adapted to form the mind of a young soldier.

"YOU can't find me," says this illustrious hero, "a more agreeable employment than to serve or oblige you; and I wish with all my heart that my inclination and abilities were of

equal force. I don't recollect what it was I recommended to Mr. ———'s nephew: it might be the Comte de Turpin's book; which was certainly worth looking into, as it contains a good deal of plain practice. Your brother, no doubt, is master of the Latin and French languages, and has some knowledge of the mathematics. Without the last he can never become acqainted with one considerable branch of our business—the construction of fortifications, and the attack and defence of places; and I would advise him by all means to give up a year or two of his time now while he is young, if he has not already done it, to the study of the mathematics, because it will greatly facilitate his progress in military matters. As to the books that are fittest for his purpose, he may begin with the king of Prussia's Regulations for his horse and foot, where the economy and good order of an army in the lower branches are extremely correct; then there are the Memoirs of the Marquis de Santa-Cruz, Feuquiere, and Montecuculi; Folard's Commentaries upon Polybius; the Projet de Tactique, ou la Phalange, couplée et doublée; L'Attaque et la Defense des Places, par le Maréchal de Vauban; Les Mémoires de Goulon; and L'Ingénieur de Campagne, par St. Re-

mi; for all that concerns artillery:—Of the ancients, Vegetius, Cesar, and Thucydides, with Xenophon's Life of Cyrus, and Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks. I don't mention Polybius, because the Commentaries and the History generally go together of later days. Davila, Guicciardini, Strada, the Memoirs of the Duc de Sully.

"THERE is abundance of military knowledge to be picked out of the Lives of Gustavus Adolphus, and Charles the Twelfth, kings of Sweden; also of Zisca the Bohemian: and if a tolerable account could be got of the exploits of Scanderbeg, it would be inestimable; for he excels all the officers ancient and modern in the conduct of a small defensive army. I met with him in the Turkish History, but no where else. The Life of Sertorius contains many fine things this way. There is a book lately published, that I have heard commended, L'Art de la Guerre par Pratique; I suppose it is collected from all the best authors that treat of war: and there is a little volume intitled De la Petite Guerre, that your brother should take in his pocket when he goes upon duties and detachments. The marshal de Puysegur's book too is in esteem. I believe Mr. —— will think this catalogue long enough;

and if he has patience to read, and a desire to apply (as I am persuaded he has) the knowledge contained in them, there is wherewithal to make him a considerable person in his profession, and of course very useful and serviceable to his country."

LETTER XXV.

ON DISCIPLINE.

HE who aspires to the honour of commanding, ought to have been long and fully instructed how to obey*. The best and wisest orders are given by those who have been accustomed to execute them. The general who is the most clear and the most precise in his commands, who is sure to be obeyed with the greatest promptitude and punctuality, is invariably he who was the most punctual and exact in executing the commands of others.

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* THE most excellent thing in the Spartan education, says Rollin, was the teaching young people so perfectly well how to obey. It is from this that the poet Simonides gives that city the epithet of *Tamer of men;* intimating that they alone knew how to subdue the passions of men, in the same manner as horses are taught to obey the spur and the bridle by being broken and managed while young. For this reason Agesilaus advised Xenophon to send his children to Sparta, that they might learn there the noblest and greatest of all sciences,—how to command and how to obey.

THERE are in military discipline some things to which sufficient attention is seldom paid; which officers look upon as trivial, and turn into ridicule, as belonging only to the character of a military pedant, or martinet. It frequently happens however that these are of no inconsiderable importance. I beg you never to allow yourself to entertain so erroneous an idea. There is nothing minute and trifling in war; negligence in the slightest things, insensibly leads to indifference in those of greater moment. It is no part of the business of him who obeys, to inquire into the motives and the purpose of the orders given to him; submission is his duty, and not examination: they who reason most are commonly found the most deficient in performing; such characters are the never-failing cause of relaxation in discipline, and too often prepare the way for the utter destruction of an army.

CESAR, accustomed to rise above every obstacle, required the most rigid discipline, as well as the boldest intrepidity, in those under his command. When he ordered them to march on any expedition, they were told that they must execute his orders without delay; and forewarned that neither the danger nor the difficulties of the

enterprise would be admitted as any excuse. Such cautions always produced a good effect, and his officers were seen to brave the greatest perils.

It is not enough that the method of the discipline be good, and its principle excellent, unless it be maintained with inflexible regularity. A diminution in this strict regard to the military duty, will very soon reduce the boldest troops to the condition of the most feeble, or of barbarians. Peace, that state which is the just end of all military exertion, may become an evil more to be dreaded than war itself, if, in a time of tranquillity, the same spirit of discipline has not been maintained. The moment of a revival of hostilities is not the season to remedy corruption and degeneracy. Subordination in the officers is the soul of discipline: for if these do not exhibit the most implicit obedience in executing the orders given to them, their example will very soon be followed by the soldiers; and, pervading the whole mass, will taint the very principle of their existence as an army.

Hannibal knew perfectly how to ensure respect to his commands. When he commanded, he did it with an air of so much greatness, as

produced immediate and unreluctant submission. His manners made him the delight equally of the general and of the soldier.

THE majority of officers obey with too much indifference, and without promptitude or attachment; a great many, even with repugnance, and without any regard to the general interest, by which alone their actions ought to be regulated. On the other hand, many of those who command, mingle so much of pride and haughtiness in the manner of giving their orders, as to manifest their vanity in making others feel their superiority. Such men forget the intimate connection between those who command and those who are called to obey; as if good discipline did not impose duties of equal obligation on both.

MARSHAL TURENNE was actuated by the purest zeal for the service of his country. When promoted to the rank of captain, he was equally assiduous to fulfil his duties, as he had been in an inferior station. He exercised his own troop so diligently, as never on any occasion to confide this charge to his lieutenant. He did not avail himself of any of those pretexts which his extreme youth might have warranted, to relax his attention to whatever could interest his company: he excelled in the art of governing his

soldiers; he spoke to them with kindness, reproved them with moderation, and corrected them with forbearance; he suffered among them no negligence or omissions in their duty, no relaxation in their manners, nor in the obedience which they were required to yield him. He encouraged them to exactitude and regularity; and to a brotherly regard for each other, of which he gave them an eminent example, by the interest that he took in whatever concerned them, and the liberality that he displayed in the whole of his intercourse with them.

The object of true discipline is to inspire men with bravery, firmness, patience, and delicate sentiments of honour; these are the qualities that render an army formidable. Such discipline differs widely from what is commonly, but improperly, called by that name; and which consists in nothing more than a proficiency in the use of arms. I am very far from wishing to make you indifferent to any part of your profession; every branch of it is highly important: agility and address in the use of arms are essential to a soldier; a company that is aukward in its manœuvres, has not only an ill appearance, but gives an unfavourable opinion of the whole of its discipline. The nations who have been the

most warlike, have at all times been the most dexterous in the management of their arms: this dexterity gives confidence to the soldiers, and imposes greatly on an enemy who is deficient in that attainment. Do not think however, with persons of contracted minds, that the knowledge of tactics, consists merely in being able to handle a musquet with address. The secret of this art is less in the use of your weapons, than in the performance of the various movements and evolutions: habituate yourself to the practice of these; and that you may not be fruitlessly occupied, bear in mind that in exercises of this nature, it is by familiarly acquainting yourself with the principles on which they depend, that you can alone attain to that proficiency which should be the object of your ambition.

It is truly surprising that soldiers have in almost all ages been harassed with a variety of evolutions, of no use whatever in a day of battle; while at the same time it has been found so difficult to instruct them in what it is absolutely essential for them to know. We find in many authors who have written on the ancient tactics, accounts of an endless number of evolutions practised by the soldiers, which could be of no uti-

lity in an encounter with an enemy; and this error has even prevailed to a great degree in modern times.

A STEADY firmness and regularity are undoubtedly essential in military exercise; but it is not proper to be exclusively attached to any set of evolutions; and to believe them so excellent as on no occasion to admit of change according to the genius, or manner of fighting, of the enemy.—Cesar, in his campaign in Africa, after having forced the town of Zeta at the first onset, perceived, in the difficulty of his retreat to regain his camp, that his cohorts were often embarrassed in their movements, and that the cavalry had not done all that he expected from them. Far from questioning the valour of his troops, he soon found that the occasion of his disappointment was in the defect of their exercise: and as this great man always acted on regular principles, he endeavoured to remedy the evil as soon as he had discovered it; by teaching *himself* to his soldiers, notwithstanding the variety of his other occupations, new attitudes, and a new method of managing the *pilum** in mak-

* A SORT of javelin; a missive weapon used in charging the enemy. Each soldier was provided with two.

ing use of it against the Numidians, whose manner of fighting so much differed from the Gauls, and from all other nations against which he had hitherto combated. He even caused elephants to be brought into his camp, to familiarize his soldiers to these animals, and to instruct them where to strike them. He made his cavalry engage with them with blunted arrows, in order to accustom the horses to their cries, to their smell, and to the sight of their unwieldy bulk. All these attentions were considered by Cesar as essential; well knowing that the valour of the soldier often depends upon the confidence which he has in his arms, and in his address and agility in managing them.

THE tranquility enjoyed during peace, admits of ample time for the important business of instructing the officers, and keeping up the discipline and the exercise of the soldiers. But it is not sufficient that the troops should be practised in their manœuvres only; they must also know how to dig trenches, to make fascines, gabions, and in short, to perform all the labours of the camp, as well as to construct all works of fortification of the lighter kind: these are duties which almost daily occur in the course of a campaign; and it is of the utmost importance that a

soldier should be habituated beforehand to handle the spade, the pickaxe, the shovel, and the hatchet, with as much dexterity as his offensive weapons.

EXERCISES of a nature similar to the actual manœuvres of war, are also the best means of preventing that relaxation, or perhaps annihilation, of martial ardour, which idleness and luxury engender, and which are the usual consequences of inaction and peace; these exercises will constantly call to the minds of the troops the operations of war, and keep up among them the military spirit.

HABITUAL exercise, says a recent author, is the first part of the military art; and the more it is considered, the more essential it will appear. It disengages the human frame from the stiff rusticity of simple nature, and forms men and horses to all the duties of war. The honour, merit, appearance, strength, and success of a corps, depend wholly on the attention which has been paid to the drill and exercise of it: while on the other hand we see the greatest armies, for want of practice, instantly disordered, and that disorder increasing in spite of command; the confusion oversets the art of skilful masters, and the valour of the men only serves to precipitate the

defeat. The greatest advantage derived from exercise is the expertness with which men become capable of loading and firing, and their becoming habituated to act in conformity with those around them. It is to be lamented, that men are ever brought on service, without being informed of the uses of the different manœuvres which they have been practising; whence, having no ideas of any thing but the uninterrupted strictness of the parade, they instantly fall into disorder and confusion when they lose their accustomed regularity. It is a pity to see so much attention confined to show, and so little given to instruct the troops in what may be of use to them on service. Though the parade is the place to form the characters of soldiers, and to teach them uniformity, yet to be confined to that alone is too limited and mechanical for a true military genius.

ONE cause of the great loss which our troops sustained in Germany, America, and the West Indies, during a former war, from sickness, and not from the enemy, was a neglect of exercise. For though fighting is one part of a soldier's business, yet bearing fatigue and preserving health is another, and at least as essential. A campaign may pass without a battle; but no part of a

campaign can be gone through without fatigue, marches, and an exposure to bad weather: and if soldiers are not trained and inured to these casualties, but sink under them, they grow inadequate to bodily fatigue, and eventually become a burthen to their country*.

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* An eminent army-physician, speaking of the benefits to be derived to health from habits of daily exercise, says:—

"This is an object of the greatest importance, but unfortunately it is an object very seldom attended to, and appears indeed to be little regarded in most of the armies of modern Europe.

"If I durst take so great a liberty, I should be inclined to say, that our ordinary exercises are flat and insipid in their nature; that they occasion no exertions, and excite no emulation; they neither improve the active powers of the body, nor inure the soldier to bear fatigue and hardship. The Romans, who owed more to the discipline of their armies than any other nation on earth, were extremely rigorous and persevering in their exercises. They practised their soldiers in every species of service that might occur, so that nothing at any time happened with which they were unacquainted. Actual war was in reality a time of relaxation and amusement to the troops of this warlike people; who appeared to have been trained for the service of the field, as horses are for hunting or the course. The Romans were not only sensible of the advantages which those habits of exercise procured them in action, but had also

It is not from numbers, or from inconsiderate valour, that we are to expect victory: in battle

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the penetration to discover that they were eminently serviceable in the preservation of health.

"I remarked in America, that when the men were in the field, sometimes even complaining of hardship and fatigue, few were reported in the list of the sick: but when removed to quarters, or encamped for any length of time in one place, the hospital was observed to fill rapidly. This observation was uniformly verified, as often as repeated.

"This is a branch of the military discipline, indeed, no less necessary than a knowledge of the use of arms; and though it is a part of it difficult to be accomplished, there is still room to believe that it may be effected, even in the so much dreaded climate of Jamaica. It is a common opinion, that the fatigues of an active campaign in the West Indies would be fatal to the health of the troops; but the opinion has been assumed without fair trial. The exertions of a single day have often been hurful. This was frequently the case in America, where the soldiers had remained for some time in a state of rest; but bad effects from even the greatest exertions, in the hottest weather of summer, were extremely rare in that country, after the campaign had been continued for a few days. A soldier, notwithstanding he may have received the king's pay for twenty years or more, remains in some degree a recruit, till his body has been inured to fatigue, and prepared to bear without danger the effects of the climate in which he may be destined to serve.

this commonly follows capacity, and a knowledge of arms. We do not see that the Romans made use of any other means to conquer the world, than a continual practice of military exercises, an exact discipline in their camps, and a constant attention to cultivate the art of war. In fact, when troops are convinced of the wisdom and propriety of

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"It would be reckoned presumption in me, to point out those exercises which might be proper for the forming of soldiers; but every one knows that walking, running, wrestling, leaping, fencing, and swimming, are often called into actual use in the practice of war. These are such exercises likewise as excite emulation, and are practised with pleasure by the individual: they harden the body, increase the powers of the limbs, and by furnishing the officer with a view of the different degrees of activity, may often enable him to place his men in the ranks according to the uniformity of their exertions; a more useful mode of arrangement in time of action, than uniformity of exterior form. I may add in this place, that sea-bathing will be extremely useful in most cases, in increasing the vigour and preserving the health of soldiers serving in warm climates. No doubt there will occur many cases in which it is improper; but in general, it may be employed with great benefit.

By arts like these
Laconia nurs'd of old her hardy sons;
And Rome's unconquer'd legions urg'd their way,
Unhurt, through ev'ry toil, in ev'ry clime."

the methods employed by their leaders to ensure the well-being and success of those under them; when fully persuaded of their activity as well as their discretion; they feel that confidence which must necessarily secure obedience, firmness, and valour: for valour is a natural consequence of a reliance on our own strength; and this is produced in them by the persuasion of being more alert, and in better condition, than their enemies.

THIS good opinion it is so much the more requisite to establish and to maintain, as there are occasions in which the greatest advantages may be derived from it: and when under proper management and regulation, it is capable of producing the most important effects; not only by the love of glory with which it inspires a whole people, but by the emulation which it excites in particular persons and corps. Too much pains cannot be employed to raise this spirit in nations as well as in individuals. The means which I have now pointed out are, in my opinion, the best adapted to form and to maintain the discipline of an army. A state is always well defended, when its troops are selected and constituted with discernment, and exercised in conformity to the object for which they are intended.

Courage may degenerate among a nation which has formerly produced the noblest examples of it, by means which a wise government or salutary regulations might easily prevent. A people whose natural constitution, or whose characteristic activity, has heretofore rendered them formidable, would continue so still, if luxury and corruption of manners, the mixture of other nations, certain revolutions of opinion, self-interest (that bane of patriotism), and relaxation of discipline, did not effect a change in the impressions which they had received. The security attendant on a long peace is sometimes sufficient to weaken, or even to annihilate, the martial character of a nation: and if an enlightened policy does not prevent the military, by the most vigorous measures, from partaking in this fatal indolence and degeneracy, discipline is insensibly relaxed; its exercises are thought fatiguing, are gradually neglected (and by degrees almost entirely discontinued); and a nation, before every where victorious, becomes in a short time disgusted and averse from the profession of arms, and is at length so enervated that the state is left exposed at every instant to the greatest calamities.

When these evils first begin to show them-

selves in an army (evils no less fatal to the honour than to the security of a state), there is not a moment to be lost in applying a remedy. We have seen at the commencement of the last century, a power rise up between the Oder and the Spree, and resist almost the whole force of Europe united against it*: and what are the means which it employed in its defence? They were no other than the continual and unremitting practice of all the military exercises, a constant attention to every thing connected with the art of war, and above all, the severest regard to discipline.

EVERY nation that possesses an acknowledged superiority in the military art, is respected in proportion to the degree of that superiority: but, as I before observed, it is neither from the number nor the valour of the troops only, that victory must be expected; this is ordinarily the consequence of their proficiency in the manœuvres, and their agility in managing their arms. A thorough acquaintance with the military art, insensibly strengthens courage; and soldiers constantly habituated to the exercises of war, only want an opportunity to execute the duties which

* THE Prussian monarchy.

they have so completely acquired. Besides, good troops, those that are well disciplined and well trained, are no more expensive to maintain than bad: and a small number inured to the usages of war, and made strong by habits of labour, fly to victory; while a great army without solid principles of action, is often little better than a multitude of men led to slaughter. In short, there is no truth more evident, than that the sovereign who is anxious to preserve peace, ought to make it one of his first cares to form good troops, who may at all times be ready to exemplify the excellent lessons and discipline by which he has qualified them.

DISCIPLINE, when once established, requires only a repetition of the same habits, and the same exercises, to preserve it in vigour. There is nothing more easy than to introduce into an army the severest discipline, without the fear of any ill consequence from such severity. Indeed this is always less dangerous than the consequences which result from the opposite extreme.

NOT to be too sparing of rewards, and to know how to exhibit punishments with advantage, are two most essential points, and the most powerful springs of discipline: and these the Romans made the basis of their greatness. The

firmness which administers the government of an army, should be unshaken; but let severity be at all times tempered with justice and mercy. If you cannot induce soldiers to be fond of discipline, let them at least respect it, as a sacred principle which must not be violated; and the breach of which they are to consider themselves as obliged to punish in others, were they themselves the judges.

But is it indeed so hard a task to teach a soldier the love of discipline? Make him to consider it as his first duty: he will soon cherish it as such, when he comes to be assured that his superiors notice his exactitude; when he finds his observance of it rewarded with distinction and preference; and when he sees, that if such conduct be not degrading in an officer, it must surely be honourable to the soldier;—for though in all other classes of the community, an implicit obedience weakens courage, yet in the military it seems, on the contrary, to elevate and strengthen it. In the orders of a general, the greater are the difficulties to be surmounted, the more eager is commonly the ambition of being charged with the execution of them. Thus we see clearly, that discipline can form, even from those whose character has been vitiated and cor-

corrupted, a band of heroes; while without this, the most courageous general, with the greatest number of troops, can never flatter himself with possessing an *army*. Shame can effect nothing with the multitude: but the principle of fear, which renders them weak and base on occasions of danger, operates favourably in discipline, in garrisons, and camps; and rigour accomplishes in an army, what the incentive of pride and of honour produces in an individual.

Good discipline is to a soldier, what good education is to a youth. Both tend to promote a hatred of particular vices, or a love of virtues. Both form useful subjects to the community. That valour which is the effect of discipline, is imbibed, as it were, physically, and mechanically. Pyrrhus used to say, "Give only men: no matter if they be the most effeminate and luxurious: I will soon change their natures, and make them good soldiers." This rigid discipline is unknown among us, and it is to be hoped that we shall never seek to revive it. It existed however in all its strictness among the Greeks and Romans*.

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* The most memorable instance of ancient discipline is in the story of Manlius, which is thus related by Rollin:

ON DISCIPLINE.

AURELIAN recovered the discipline of the Roman armies, at a time when corruption, dis-

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In a council of war it was determined, that the ancient strict discipline should be observed, and that no officer or soldier should dare to fight with the enemy out of his ranks; and this was proclaimed through all the camp: a precaution extremely necessary at this time, when the Romans were at war with the Latins, with whom they were personally acquainted (having often served together), who spoke the same language, were armed in the same manner, and observed the same way of fighting and of marshalling their troops. It happened soon after, that young Manlius, the consul's son, being at the head of a detachment of horse, met an advanced squadron of the enemy; whose commander knowing him, challenged him to single combat. Manlius, piqued in point of honour, and forgetting the late order, accepted the challenge, killed his adversary, stripped him of his armour, and came straight to his father's tent, loaded with the glorious spoil. "Father!" exclaimed he, "I have proved myself worthy of your name: I was challenged by an enemy, to single combat; I have slain him, and here I lay his spoils at your feet." The consul turned his back on his son, ordered the troops to be assembled, and then in their presence made him this reply: "Since you, Titus Manlius, in contempt of the consular dignity and the authority of a father, and in contradiction to my express orders, have been so rash as to leave your ranks to fight the enemy; since you have destroyed, so far, that military discipline which has been hitherto the support of the Ro-

obedience, luxury, and ignorance of the military art, were carried to the greatest possible extent;

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man people, and reduced me to the hard alternative of forgetting either my parental feelings or the regard which I owe to the public interest; Rome must not suffer the punishment of your fault—we must expiate it ourselves. A sad example shall we be, but a wholesome one to the youth of the Roman soldiery. As for me, both the natural affection of a father for a son, and that specimen which thou, deceived by a vain appearance of honour, hast given of thy valour, affect me exceedingly. But since either the consular authority must be established by thy death, or quite destroyed by thy impunity, I cannot think that, if there be any of the Manlian blood in thee, thou wilt be backward to repair the breach which thou hast made in military discipline, by undergoing the punishment due to such an offence." Having spoken thus, he ordered the lictors to tie his son to a stake, and strike off his head.—All present were shocked at the cruel sentence, as if it had been pronounced against themselves; and if they continued quiet, it was more out of fear and astonishment than reverence. And no sooner was the young man beheaded, and his blood seen to gush out, than, recollecting themselves, they vented their anger in imprecations and invectives against the father: but the dead body of the son they covered with the spoils of the Latin whom he had vanquished, and expressed their affection for him by the most pompous obsequies which they could in the field, perform to his honour. Extreme and excessive, doubtless, was this severity of Manlius:

but this revolution was effected only by the rigour of his punishments. He instigated the Romans to the most heroic and extraordinary deeds, by the hope of advancement to the highest posts in the army, which he bestowed with the same certainty and justice as he punished the slightest negligence or inattention to duty. This sagacious warrior considered that an extreme of punishment for faults, as well as of remuneration for heroic achievements, was productive of the greatest advantage. The courage and the firmness necessary to introduce such a discipline into the Roman legions at that period, showed no ordinary character in him who would dare to attempt it. Aurelian was now only general of the armies of the emperor Valerian: he afterward became emperor himself, in consequence of those splendid virtues and exploits with which his life is crouded.

I AM aware that I ought principally to confine my observations to what will concern *yourself;*

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nevertheless, it had this good effect, that it made his army wonderfully tractable for the future, and strictly observant of discipline; which proved of the utmost importance in the general engagement with the enemy a few days afterward.

and that these remarks are somewhat foreign to the plan which I had proposed, for I cannot hope that it will ever be your lot to change the temper of a kingdom or of an army: but remember, that you may very soon have it in your power to give an example to a regiment; and this is no unimportant situation. I hope then it will be your care to acquire distinction by your exactness, your obedience, and your attention to making yourself feared, beloved, and respected, by your soldiers; and to gain their confidence. These are the only means of attracting the notice of your superiors, and of inducing them to entrust you with more important commands, that, in adding to your reputation and your glory, will conduct you to those distinguished posts which it should be the constant object of your ambition to acquire. Every officer may aspire thus far without being charged with presumption; and he who does not aim at the first rank, will never be any thing beyond the line of ordinary men.

NOTHING more contributes to inspire a love of discipline, than good morals. It has been well observed, that from corruption of manners, to contempt of military laws, there is only one step: when punishments do not closely follow

offences of this nature, the transition to insolence is both easy and rapid; and this is accelerated by impunity, and ordinarily ends in faction and revolt. The evil spreads gradually; but when a portion of an army give manifest evidence of a mutinous spirit, there is no longer a remedy. The factious temper of a people whose interests are divided, is easily quelled: but a corrupted military is not to be changed; and those who examine with attention, will find that such corruption is usually generated among officers whose negligence, debauchery, and luxury, are the great bane of a state. Soldiers who see themselves headed by such men, naturally despise them: disobedience is the necessary effect of this contempt, and revolt generally follows. When disobedience has arrived at a certain height, the punishment of a few of the most atrocious offenders has often no other effect than to irritate the whole body.

It is surprising how few persons have correct notions on the subject of a strict discipline. All military men applaud it; but if you ask them in what it consists, scarcely one will answer you in a satisfactory manner. Since Europe has emerged from a state of barbarism, the military discipline of the Romans has excited universal

admiration; while at the same time, no modern nation has endeavoured to introduce it. This discipline is the most formidable of all qualities for an army to possess: victory is rarely obtained without it, and valour is inseparable from it. How many and how important battles have been determined less by the effects of bravery and of numbers, than of practice and skill!

I CANNOT too often repeat it, peace is to armies, what rust is to metals. The military spirit is like fire; its essence consists in action. If this ceases with war; if the troops pass several years without being encamped; if they no longer familiarize themselves with the evolutions of a campaign, or inure themselves to military labours; the state will have every thing to fear, whenever it shall be threatened with a sudden attack. In this situation, the generals who suffered all the hardships of the last war, will be no longer equal to the command of such armies. Old officers disgusted with that service which has left them unrewarded, will give place to young men without experience, and without capacity, who will complete the disgrace of their prince, and the misfortunes of the state.

I WILL conclude what I have addressed to you on this important subject, by urging you

to bear in mind, that a well-disciplined army will always possess a great superiority over one that is not so, when their numbers are equal; and that the officer who is most attentive to this essential part of the military art, is he who will merit the preference above his companions, as best qualified for filling a station of eminence. The officer who is ignorant of the different branches of discipline, and who perhaps even treats them with contempt, will, when called to act, find himself greatly embarrassed: he has not by his attention, his activity, or his zeal for the service, previously acquired the confidence of the soldiers, and cannot reckon upon it at the moment when he is about to lead them against the enemy. In this extremity, when he finds himself compelled to take advice of every one about him, he will be deceived, despised, and abandoned by his troops; and reduced either to surrender in disgrace, or to sacrifice his life without glory to himself, or advantage to his country.

I shall have occasion further to illustrate the subject of Discipline, in a future Letter, in which I shall treat of Tactics.

LETTER XXVI.

OF THE MEANS OF ACQUIRING THE CONFIDENCE OF THE SOLDIERS.

SAGACITY and foresight in a general, naturally and readily gain the confidence of the officers and soldiers under his command; and this confidence establishes a conviction of the wisdom of his plans, which are thus executed with readiness and zeal. Though soldiers usually calculate rather upon the good fortune than the good conduct of the commander, yet there are always some among them who exercise their judgment on the conduct of their officers.

IN the campaign in which Turenne made himself master of Franche-Comté, a camp was formed not far from Strasburg. The whole army, supposing that they should there await the arrival of the Germans, worked with incessant labour at the trenches; with the exception only of one veteran, who did not attemp to render any assistance. Turenne asked him the reason of his idleness. "Because," replied

the soldier smiling, "you will not remain here long." Turenne, struck with the sagacity of this man, made him a handsome present, enjoined him secrecy, and created him a lieutenant.

NOTHING proves more forcibly the influence which a great reputation has on common minds, than the exclamation which Cesar used when he was crossing a branch of the sea, between Brundusium and Dyrrachium. He embarked by night in the habit of a slave, and lay on the boards like an ordinary passenger. As they were to sail down the river Annius, a violent storm arose, which quite overcame the art of the pilot, who gave orders to put back: this however Cesar would not permit; but, discovering himself, and taking the astonished pilot by the hand, bade him boldly go on and fear nothing, "For," cried he, "thou carriest Cesar and his fortunes*."

THE opinion formed by an officer, is still more just than that of the soldier, as it is the result of a superior knowledge. He examines events in detail, and bestows his confidence only on the sagacity and skill which have a right to require it.

* "*Quid times?—Cæsarem vehis.*"

THE confidence and the esteem of the soldiers are also easily ensured to their officers by affability and condescension, and by anticipating and providing for their wants. These two grounds of attachment prove always beneficial to such as act on them. The greatest generals have been indebted for a part of their fame to this confidence of their troops; who could not help esteeming the man that made it his delight to consult their happiness, and that shared the honour of every victory with them.

WOULD you wish to excite the bravery of your troops?—be *yourself* brave. Soldiers always follow well when they are well commanded, and have a brave man at their head. It is only by exposing your own person, that you must hope to induce your soldiers to hazard theirs in situations of imminent danger.

MUSTAPHA, general of Amurat the Third, finding that his army refused to cross the river of Canao, passed over himself the first. The troops, roused by this example, instantly threw themselves in and followed; convinced how disgraceful it would be for them not to dare to attempt what their general had accomplished in their sight.

THE effects of such conduct are certain and

infallible: for when an officer is himself the first to execute a difficult enterprise, no one can refuse to follow him. He will then have little reason to fear that his soldiers should say to him, as those spoken of by Strada, "that it is not so easy to do what is ordered, as to order what must be done."

Of all the generals that have ever lived, he who best knew how to gain the confidence and the love of his soldiers, was unquestionably Hannibal. It cannot but excite our utmost astonishment to see him, during seventeen years of war, at the head of an army composed of so many nations speaking different languages, leading them to the most dangerous enterprises, without the least snare having been ever laid for his person, and without an instance of a single soldier having ever attempted to betray him.

It does not require so much care as is ordinarily imagined, to secure the confidence of the soldiers. This is not to be effected by too much favour and indulgence; but rather by a mixture of just and well-timed severity, founded on a rigid conformity to the rules of discipline. At the same time, the soldier must perceive that his officer assists him as much as in his power, and never punishes but with justice and with re-

gret. The officer who aims at possessing the entire confidence of the soldier, ought sometimes even to speak familiarly to him, to listen to his stories, and to bear with his jests.

It came to the knowledge of the king of Prussia, that a corporal of his body-regiment, a fine young fellow, wore a watch-chain suspended from a leaden ball, merely from a wish to appear consequential. Frederic, wishing to be convinced of the matter, accosted the corporal one day on the parade. "Corporal," said he, "you must be a prudent fellow, to have saved a watch out of your pay." "I flatter myself that I am brave, sire," replied the man; "the watch is of little consequence." The king, taking out a watch set with diamonds, said: "My watch points at five. How much is yours?" Shame and confusion at first appeared in the corporal's face: at length he drew out his bullet, and answered with a firm voice: "My watch, sire, shews me neither five nor six, but it tells me that I ought to be ready, at every hour, to die for your majesty." The king replied: "In order that you may daily see one of those hours at which you are to die for me, take this watch*."

* The prince of Conti, being highly delighted with the intrepid behaviour of a grenadier at the battle of Phi-

In one of the forced marches of his army, Frederic rode beside his cavalry, and heard a trooper at a short distance make a horrid noise with cursing and swearing. He immediately rode up to him, and heard him exclaim, among many other oaths: "I wish this confounded sort of life was at an end."—"You are very right, my lad," said the king: "I wish the same: but what can we do? We must have patience, till it is peace."—By such instances of occasional condescension and lenity did Frederic acquire the confidence of his soldiers, and secure their exertions in gaining those glorious victories which have conferred on him the title of the Great*.

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lipsburg in 1734, threw him his purse; excusing the smallness of the sum it contained, as being too poor a reward for his courage. Next morning the grenadier went to the prince with two diamond rings, and other jewels of considerable value. "Sir," said he, "the gold I found in your purse, I suppose you intended for me; but these I bring back to you, having no claim to them." "You have doubly deserved them," replied the prince, "by your bravery and your honesty; therefore they are yours."

* After the action near Breslaw in Silesia, between the Prussians and the Austrians, which preceded the battle of Lissa, and before the two armies met in this latter contest, a French soldier in Frederic's service, who had

ZIETEN extended even to the private soldier, the happy talent which he possessed of encouraging the disheartened. He was aware that the inaction and languor of camps are apt to give birth to discontent, and that in such situations the distresses of want and hunger are felt with double severity by the troops. To prevent or mitigate such murmurs, he would often visit the ranks on foot as well as on horseback, and invite the soldiers to come out of their tents. "Well, comrades," he would say, "what are you doing there?" As soon as his voice was heard, they would instantly appear, and cry out, "Long live our good father Zieten!"—"Well, and how do things go on with you?" he would add. If they should answer, "bad enough," he was nevertheless able to apply a word of comfort: "Take courage, comrades," he would reply; "if things go ill to-day, they may be better to-morrow." He has been frequently seen to

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just deserted, was stopped, and conducted to the king. "Why did you leave me?" said Frederic. "Because," answered the soldier, "your affairs are too desperate."—"Well," replied the king, "go back to your colours. We shall have another battle soon; and if I lose it, come and find me out, and you and I will desert together."

alight from his horse, and converse with his veteran grenadiers: he has dispelled the cloud that hung on their brows, and often rendered them insensible to the torments of hunger by regaling them frequently with hope. This great popularity, accompanied with a frank benevolence of disposition which extended itself indiscriminately to every individual in the camp, had gained him the respect and confidence of the whole army to such a degree, that with one accord the soldiers had no other name for him than that of Father.

LETTER XXVII.

OF THE MEANS OF ENSURING THE COURAGE OF THE SOLDIERS.

IN situations of a very critical nature, the soldier endeavours to read the countenance of his officer. If he sees him firm and composed, he becomes himself confident. If, on the other hand, he discovers any marks of apprehension in his leader, he is alarmed, or discouraged. Thus whatever may excite disquietude in the soldier, whether it be that the enemy has received a powerful reinforcement, or has gained some great advantage, an officer ought never to discover any emotion at it. Let his aspect on such occasions be calm, firm, and unmoved; let nothing disclose his secret agitation. Let his manners be more than ordinarily forward and free; and let him assume, as much as possible, a sort of gaiety and cheerfulness.

BUT in proportion as the soldier is animated by the assured and intrepid countenance of his officer, so he is equally discouraged by his dis-

quietude. He is even, as it were, vanquished before the battle.

It was usual among the ancients, for generals to harangue their soldiers previous to an engagement. This custom however is too old to be traced to its origin. Short harangues, if any are adopted, will always prove the best; for that natural impulse by which the aggregate of mankind are driven into acts of peril and possible destruction, is of too volatile a nature to bear suspense.

We find among the ancient historians, various instances in which generals of armies have thought fit to harangue their troops. It must be acknowledged however, that the greater part of these speeches have been studiously drawn up by ingenious writers, and then put into the lips of the heroes whom they have thought proper to celebrate. Those which contain most commonsense, and are conveyed in short pithy sentences, will produce the best effects.

Eloquence is certainly a qualification which every general of an army should possess; but it is not, in our days, an essential requisite in his character. Cesar was naturally endowed with a most captivating talent in the exercise of words; and he used it, on many occasions, to considerable advantage. The manner in which he was

accustomed to address his men became so celebrated, that several persons belonging to his army carefully selected his military harangues; and if we may believe Folard, the emperor Augustus was particularly pleased and entertained in having them read to him.

LET an harangue be never so eloquent, it is always less persuasive than the countenance of the commander. An artful and studied speech may be suspected, but a composed and martial air makes a powerful impression.—Before an engagement it was the custom of the duke of Marlborough to ride along the front of his line; and with a face of more than usual cheerfulness, to tell the troops to be steady, to go on and keep up their fire, and the enemy would soon be disposed of. So entirely did this great general possess the confidence of his men, that even when it seemed impossible that they should be extricated from their difficulties, they were accustomed to make themselves easy, saying: " Well, it is no matter to us; *corporal John*" (for so the soldiers called him) " will find some way to bring us off."

BUT on such occasions, a studied eloquence must not be affected; for this is more calculated to show a desire in a general of having his oratory applauded, than of informing the minds of

his soldiers, and exciting in them heroic sentiments. True eloquence, but more especially military eloquence, ought to derive all its strength from the moment, the circumstances, and the occasion, which prompt it. A general, who to facility of speech, unites a lively conception of his subject, is always sufficiently an orator, and will not fail to make the strongest impressions on his auditors. To adapt himself to the situation, the time, and the disposition of the soldiers,—this is the genuine rhetoric of an officer. An address to soldiers ought to be simple and noble, and more replete with sense than with words.—That of Henry the Fourth of France, at the battle of Ivry, is of this nature. Just before the engagement, this prince passing along the line, and showing to his army his helmet surmounted with a white plume, called aloud to them: "Comrades, if by any accident you should be without your standards, behold this signal of rallying, which you will always find on the way to victory."

It is not only by regular speeches that an army can be encouraged and animated, but the entire fate of an enterprise, or the fortune of a day, has been known to be changed by the looks

and gestures of an officer, accompanied with some sudden and appropriate exclamation.—When a dangerous mutiny broke out among the Roman legions, on a proposed expedition against the Germans, Cesar suddenly exclaimed: "Let the whole army return ignominiously home, if it thinks proper; the Tenth legion and myself will remain and combat for the republic." Having thus excited his troops to fresh ardour, he led them against the Germans; and took an immediate occasion to force them to battle, in which he, as usual, obtained a victory.

WHEN Peter the Great saw his army giving way before Leuenhaupt, he ran to the rear-guard of it, and exclaimed to the Cossacs and Calmucs: "I order you to fire directly upon any one who shall not keep his post; and even to fire upon me the first of all, if I should be coward enough to attempt to fly." This intrepid behaviour decided the fate of Charles the Twelfth at the calamitous field of Pultowa.

THE archduke Charles in 1796, when the Austrians were precipitately retreating, dismounted, and placing himself at the head of the grenadiers, exclaimed: "There is the enemy," pointing to the French: "You have mistaken

the road; there shall be no retreat where I am."—And he beat the French*.

At the battle of Prague, after one of the Prussian regiments had broken through the enemy's line, it came upon a very broad ditch, that seemed full of mud. Some planks for foot passengers lay across it in different places, and the soldiers began to defile over these. Prince Henry, who led them on, as soon as he perceived this, threw himself from his horse, which he let go, and sprung into the ditch, crying, "Boys, follow me." In an instant the whole regiment leaped into the ditch, up to their knees; and having waded through it, fell upon the enemy, and soon forced them to give way.

At the battle af Leipsic, the Imperialists having routed the Saxons, pushed on to the baggage, as if the victory had been secured: when Gustavus, leaving a body of troops to defend the post and the artillery which he had taken, put himself at the head of four thousand chosen horse, and as many good musqueteers, and cry-

* William the Third, king of England, never appeared in spirits but when he was at the head of his troops. To some dragoon who was running away in an engagement, he gave a blow with his sword in the face, saying, "Now I shall know where to find a coward."

ing out to the men, "Follow me, and fear nothing!" rushed furiously into the midst of the Imperialists; killing many with his own hand, and doing dreadful execution on them, while they were scattered in disorder, and engaged in plundering his baggage.

During the last war, a large body of French troops who landed at St. Lucie, were defeated by a handful of British soldiers who had retired to an eminence called St. Vigie, under sir William Medows. This brave and gallant officer, after having been wounded in his right arm, rallied the Fifth regiment of foot in front of the colours; and waving his sword in the left hand, enthusiastically exclaimed: "Soldiers, as long as you have a bayonet left to point against the breasts of your enemies, defend these colours."

There are cases in which no other resource must be left to the soldier than victory, by clearly showing him that his only refuge is in despair. He must then be convinced that flight would be more fatal than a glorious resistance: that in flying he commits himself entirely to the mercy of the enemy; but in defending his life he may both save himself, and be able to attack in his turn. Every man who is fully per-

suaded of this will become a good soldier; and when brought to act upon this conviction, every thing may be expected from him, because it will preclude the possibility of his having recourse to flight.

PRINCE MAURICE, having projected an attack on the archduke at Nieuport, sent away, before the action, all the vessels which had conveyed his army into Flanders. "My friends," said he to his soldiers, "we must now either fall instantly on the enemy, or be driven into the sea. Take your choice; mine is already made. I will either conquer by your valour, or I will never survive the disgrace of being beaten by troops who despise us." His address, full of confidence and dignity of mind, had an instant effect upon his army; who fell on the Spaniards with so much violence and bravery, as to gain a speedy and complete victory. This action, apparently so rash, was in reality a measure of great wisdom, and the only one to be adopted in so critical an emergence. It was necessary to redouble the ardour of the troops; for which purpose the most effectual method was, to put them into a situation where they should have no choice but victory, or certain and inglorious death. Nor on this occasion was any advantage of real im-

portance sacrificed. If he had been beaten, his retreat was before impossible; for even had he reserved his vessels, the conqueror would never have allowed his army sufficient time to have recourse to them in safety.

LETTER XXVIII.

ON PRUDENCE.

THERE is hardly any military enterprise, when projected and attempted with previous consideration and reflection, of which prudence cannot ensure a successful issue. Warlike operations are of two kinds: either they are executed openly and by force of arms; or they are of such a nature as to require address, secrecy, and promptitude. The latter are the more frequent, and require of course superior sagacity. In every undertaking, the utmost caution must be used against the stratagems of the enemy, and as much care exerted in the defence as in the attack: for when too great attention is paid to the one the other will be neglected; and he who thinks only of beating his enemy, will be in danger of being beaten himself, from not having anticipated the events which might concur to overturn his projects and destroy his hopes.

EVERY enterprise which is not designed to answer some important end, supposing it even-

to be crowned with the most brilliant success, has no claim to applause, and is indeed less entitled to reward than to disgrace.

A MILITARY operation supposes a plan well concerted: it requires a certain time for its completion; a situation adapted to the nature of the undertaking; the private consideration of every thing that might derange its execution; secrecy; confederates; and a certain happy faculty of realizing the force of a brilliant conception. With all these prerequisites, success is almost certain: but the neglect of one point may disappoint the best concerted project; and such is the fate of all military projects, that success often depends on a concurrence of measures, which by the omission of a single one may be overthrown.

FORESIGHT is one of the most essential qualities for an officer, and necessarily implies many other acquirements connected with the art of war. To be able to anticipate all that the enemy may attempt against us, either by force of arms, or by stratagem and address; to foresee what may occasion the failure of an expedition, the various possible accidents, and the difficulties attending it; it is absolutely necessary to be acquainted with all the resources of the military art.

"A GOOD general," said the great Condé, "may be beaten; but he never can be surprised." One of his maxims was, that to enable a general not to be afraid of his enemies when they were near him, he should have taken the precaution of being afraid of them when they were at a distance.

THERE are certain fixed principles that are within the reach of every mind, a conformity to which requires only common understanding; and in the prosecution of any measures, certain appropriate attentions present themselves naturally. If a number of men enter into a wood which is infested with robbers and beasts of prey, they will intrench themselves to prevent surprise. In this precaution, even brute animals have been known to display more skill both in defending themselves, and in avoiding an enemy, than men employ against each other. Good-sense also instructs us, not to venture into a difficult country till we have reconnoitred it. An officer would be inexcusable, who should fall into an ambuscade through the neglect of this principle. There are always an infinity of snares to be expected; and these covered with so much art, that the most cautious will find it difficult to escape them. In some of these

cases, a degree of excuse may be admitted. But with regard to an ambuscade, especially if it be a strong one, the officer who suffers himself to fall into it, can plead nothing in his justification. Negligence or want of foresight, of whatever kind, is wholly unpardonable. The "*non putabam*"* is in war the most inadmissible of all excuses. War is a science founded upon principles which, arising from the united experience of all ages, are certain and demonstrable, and upon infallible rules of security and precaution. It is in the power of an officer to foresee what the enemy may attempt against him, and he ought to be always prepared for every event; and it cannot but excite our astonishment when we read in history, of great generals suffering themselves to be surprised by stratagems the most culpable, and others even by their own negligence.

THESE remarks are chiefly applicable to the operations of hostile armies in the field. The stratagems that may be put in force against a town that is besieged are innumerable, and in many cases less to be guarded against.—In the campaign of 1760, the hereditary prince of

* "I did not expect it."

Brunswick occupied a position at some distance from Zarenberg, which was in the possession of the French; and was informed by two Hanoverian officers who had been in town disguised like peasants, that the garrison were very remiss in their duty, trusting to the vicinity of the army and the distance of the allies. On receiving this intelligence, the prince resolved to surprise them; and after appointing a corps to sustain him, he advanced in the night, with major Maclean of the 88th regiment, and two hundred Highlanders, with bayonets fixed, and their arms not loaded, following at a short distance. Upon the first sentry's challenging, the prince answered in French: and the sentry, seeing but two persons advancing (whom he believed to be French), had no distrust; so that the major, advancing to him, stabbed him, and prevented his giving the alarm. The Highlanders immediately rushed in, attacked the guard with their bayonets fixed, and carried the town, having killed or taken the whole garrison of eight hundred men.

The French officer who commanded at that time at Zarenberg, concerted a scheme for being amply revenged, which failed only by a trivial accident. When almost every house in Bremen was filled with corn (it being the grand

magazine and grand hospital of the combined army), this officer held a secret correspondence with some inhabitants of that town; who informed him of the state of the garrison, and that there was a general order to let couriers going to the army pass out at all hours. He dispatched about twenty hussars to scour the country, who were all that were heard of his party; while he marched fifteen hundred infantry from Dusseldorf to Bremen (about two hundred English miles), concealing them in woods by day and marching in the night. He arrived at the gate of Bremen at the appointed hour; when a postillion on horseback, blowing a horn, came along the street and desired to pass out to the army. The officer of the guard had the keys, and happened to be out of the way: and while a messenger went for him, the people growing impatient, began to break down the outer barrier, which made the sentry fire at the place where he heard the noise, and the guard, taking the alarm, got on the rampart and likewise fired at the same place; upon which the pretended postillion galloped back, and the French, believing that they were discovered, relinquished their scheme, and retired.

This example proves, that no distance is a se-

curity from surprises; and that very considerable parties may pass over a great extent of country without being discovered.

It is especially in pursuing an enemy that the greatest precautions are required; because his retreat may be feigned, and only with the design of drawing you into an ambuscade, or of returning upon you in greater force. The hazard is then increased too, as the soldiers, thinking only of the pursuit, and animated with the prospect of booty, are more difficult to be restrained and controled. To ensure security on such occasions, it is necessary to have a well disciplined troop always at hand, whose experience and activity can be relied on, to dispatch for the purpose of examining and searching thoroughly all the avenues to the scene of action. In proportion as you advance, it will be proper to possess yourself of the high grounds, the defiles, and the chain of mountains; and make sure of the more important posts, so that you may always have it in your power to retreat without the fear of being cut off. Equal advantages will be derived from these precautions, whether they are used as snares for the enemy, or to avoid falling into such yourself.

If in observing the nature of the country,

which must always be done with the greatest care and attention, you find that a progress in it will be attended with danger, or your force is not sufficient to secure the stations of the greatest importance, it is much better to give over the pursuit, than to continue it at a hazard.

THERE are also two points of a general's duty which may be ranked under the denomination of foresight; and which should by no means be neglected, as they are objects of the highest importance:—the maintaining a constant and unabated attention to make immediate and the most effectual use of every advantage gained over the enemy; and the exerting incessant vigilance and caution to guard against being surprised or deceived by any of his stratagems.

OPPORTUNITY was represented by the ancients as a naked woman, with a long lock of hair in front, but bald behind; to intimate, that opportunity, if not laid hold on when it offers, soon slips away: also standing with one foot on a wheel, and the other in the air, holding a sail in one hand, and a razor in the other; her feet also being winged, and the wheel continually revolving, to intimate that opportunity is always inconstant and in motion.

HANNIBAL, so much celebrated for his bold

enterprises against the Romans, was guilty of a memorable error in this point. After the battle of Cannæ, it was fully in his power to march to Rome. By merely following up his first blow, and taking advantage of the consternation of the Romans, he might have pursued them to the capitol. By so doing, he would have made use of the glorious occasion which fortune had thrown into his hands by the first victory; and would not have been driven to the necessity of endeavouring to obtain the original object of his enterprise, by fighting several subsequent battles that never perfectly restored it. Adherbal on this account, after having failed in his attempt to persuade Hannibal to pursue his first good fortune, and to march to the gates of Rome, is recorded to have used the following expression: —"Hannibal, thou knowest how to conquer, but not how to make use of a victory."

Gustavus Adolphus made the same mistake. Had he, after having won the battle of Leipsic, hung upon the rear of the discomfited Imperialists, harassed and pushed them to the gates of Vienna, there is little doubt of the consequences which must have ensued. The emperor Ferdinand was as weak in effective forces at the capital, as the Romans were at Rome;

and the same consternation prevailed among the inhabitants. Had Gustavus profited by his first success, and converted the means which so glorious an occasion offered, into prompt and vigorous pursuit, he would not indeed have reaped additional laurels in the plains of Outzen, where he fell at the head of his victorious Swedes, but he must have reached Vienna, and there have dictated his own terms.

WHOEVER suffers himself to be surprised by the stratagems of his enemy, cannot be said to stand wholly exculpated from ignorance or neglect; since it must probably have been in his power to have avoided the snares laid for him, by means of vigilant spies and unremitting attention.

MANY distinguished generals have had recourse to these expedients; but none ever succeeded so well in the use of them as Hannibal. Wishing to cross the river Rhone, and being in want of almost every article that was necessary to effect the passage in the presence of an enemy who were diligently watching his motions, he caused them to imagine that it was his intention to keep the ground which he occupied. He ordered large fires to be lighted up in different quarters of his camp, and directed some of his

troops to shout and make loud noises, as if they were perfectly stationary. During this apparent state of inactivity, he broke up his camp, marched up the river, and crossed it at a place where it was least expected that he would make the attempt.

THE army under the command of the duke of Saxe-Weimar, having laid siege to Brissack in 1638, the Imperialists went to the relief of that place. The duke, on receiving intelligence of their approach, instantly marched against them, with a body of allied forces composed of Swedes and French. The Imperialists, who had advanced by rapid marches, had gained possession of an eminence by means of which they would have enjoyed all the advantages of local superiority; had not the count de Guébriant, who was then a lieutenant-general in the Swedish service, suggested a stratagem to dislodge the enemy. The plan was adopted, and it succeeded to the full extent of his design.

The drums and trumpets of the different corps were collected together, and stationed in a neighbouring wood, so as to draw the enemy's attention from the quarter intended to be carried. The Imperialists being naturally led to believe, from the noise and concurrence of se

many military instruments, that they were going to be attacked from that point, beat to arms, and left their position in complete order of battle. They had scarcely quitted the eminence, before the duke of Saxe-Weimar appeared in their rear, took possession of the ground which they had so imprudently abandoned, and became master of all the advantages which his enemy would otherwise have enjoyed.

STRATAGEMS of this description were frequently used by the French during the last war, particularly in Italy. Stratagems, in fact, constitute one of the principal branches in the art of war. They have been practised in all ages by the most able generals, and have contributed in a great degree to their military reputation.

WHEN the count De las Torres commanded for Philip the Fifth in the province of Valentia, insurrections were excited by the partisans of his rival Charles the Third. Las Torres laid siege to San Mateo, a town on the borders of the province, with seven thousand men. The earl of Peterborough, the English general in the interest of Charles, marched to the relief of the place, from Barcelona to Tortosa; but finding his force quite inadequate, he had recourse to artifice and stratagem. The people of the

surrounding country, contrary to what he had been told, were by no means inclined to his party. The scheme he employed for success was this.—He wrote a letter as for the governor of San Mateo, and intrusted it to a person acquainted with his design. This person, according to instructions, appearing as a deserter, entered the Spanish camp before the place, and delivered the letter for the governor to Las Torres. The purport of the letter was, that Peterborough was now at hand with seven thousand men; and that the whole of the country was up in favour of Charles, and busy in securing the roads and passes of the mountains, to prevent the escape of Philip's troops. It ended with desiring the governor to make a sally from the town at a certain hour, when Peterborough would likewise fall on the Spanish camp. Las Torres read the letter; and suspecting no fraud, but fearing that his retreat might be cut off, decamped suddenly before the time appointed, and marched with the greatest expedition across the mountains. Peterborough had previously taken pains to fill the country with reports of the vast body of forces approaching under the generals of Charles, so that Las Torres would not slacken his retreat

till he nad gianed some distant place of safety. —When Peterborough practised this stratagem, and put an army of seven thousand men to flight, his own party did not exceed twelve hundred.

From San Mateo he went against Nules, another town in the same quarter of Spain; but as he had very few troops, and was in all other points totally unprepared for an attack, Peterborough rode quickly up to the gate, and calling for some of the magistrates, or of the priests of the place, commanded the town to be surrendered to Charles the Third. He assured them that if they would immediately yield, they should meet with good treatment; but that if they refused, he would instantly order his army to attack and plunder the town. He granted them only six minutes for consideration; and in the mean time called aloud to his people to bring up the artillery, though he had not a single gun. Hardly had he pronounced the words, when the town was thrown open to him; and the example was followed by several others in the neighbourhood*.

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* In this manner Peterborough performed such extraordinary exploits in Spain, that the people began to give credit to all the fabulous stories of valour and wonders

An officer ought also to use continual precaution, as well against the positive attempts of the enemy, as against any indiscretions or ne-

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ful achievements related by their old romance-writers. Even in England his successes were by many regarded as obscuring the glory of Marlborough. By his spies he stirred up such rumours in Spain, that he often set the partisans of Charles and Philip to destroy one another, without his seeming to take any share in the business. His liberality was employed in supporting the priests and other persons attached to Charles III. out of his own private property. In short, the Spaniards considered the earl of Peterborough as the father of stratagems, and were persuaded that Fortune never ceased to attend him.

This great general used to keep his troops so constantly engaged in marching, and in all sorts of labour, that a new method of war, and a new military discipline, seemed to have been introduced. He made frequent incursions into the different provinces of Spain; and sometimes, making a show of giving battle, he would suddenly appear next morning in a place at a distance from his position of the day before. On this account, the Spanish commander is said to have reflected on Peterborough, as if he carried on war in a way contrary to the rules of war. To these reflections Peterborough answered, as the earl of Murray had done before to Edward the Third on the banks of the Wear; that he was resolved to conduct himself according to his own judgment, and not by the rules of his enemies.

gligences in his own conduct which may subject him to danger; and cases of this sort are wholly inexcusable when they are occasioned by the non-observance of the customary measures.—An Italian regiment was broken in the year 1778, on account of an instance of misconduct, attended with peculiar circumstances, well worthy the attention of all officers. It was commanded by a young nobleman, who had served in such a manner as to obtain a very considerable share of reputation. He was marching his regiment in column through a very difficult country, and narrow, deep-sunk, bad roads, in a very dark and stormy night. He had a great quantity of baggage with him, and unfortunately had ten or twelve loaded mules in front of his battalion. By this means he was unable to keep in sight the rear of the battalion which preceded him in the column, and shortly after, deviating from the road, he lost all communication with the army to which he belonged, as is frequently the case in similar instances. He seemed at the same time to be confounded in the use of his intellects; and could recur to no expedient to extricate himself from his difficulty, except a surrender to the enemy: accordingly, after sending out officers in search, in different di-

rections; at length a squadron of Prussian hussars was found, and being brought to the spot, the colonel surrendered his whole battalion prisoners of war. They all laid down their arms, except one ensign, who protested against it, and who was followed by about a hundred men: these regained the Austrian army in safety; the ensign was promoted to a lieutenancy, and his name inserted with honour in the gazette; the colonel and the rest of the regiment were broken: and this whole series of misfortunes originated entirely in the one error, of admitting the baggage within the line of march.

A YOUNG man ought to receive with thankfulness the advice of his seniors; and he should especially seek it of such as, by the testimony of the public voice, appear the best capable to bestow it.

IT is a mark of presumption, never to ask advice: of weakness and timidity, to undertake nothing without it; but of prudence, to have recourse to it only on proper occasions. Modesty and mistrust in our own talents, indeed denote intelligence and caution; but it is disgraceful, never to resolve on any measure without the aid of others. He who is continually wavering, is in danger of being often misled, because he leaves himself in the hands of the last adviser. There-

are circumstances in which this want of decision is fatal; the time employed in the discussion of various opinions, might in many instances be much more profitably spent in exertion.

It is highly necessary however to distinguish between irresolution, and a suitable diffidence of our own talents and capacity. The one is a sluggishness of mind; a timidity which propels from one subject to another; which presents only the obstacles to a measure, without at the same time discovering the means by which they may be overcome. The other results from a penetration which discovers at once the extent of its own powers and that of its danger; from the wisdom which estimates them both; and from the modesty which fears to be mistaken.

The officer who should risk an enterprise, the issue of which may be more injurious and fatal, than its success could be advantageous and useful, is highly culpable; for a trifling advantage ought not to be put in competition with total ruin: in such case therefore, the risk is the height of imprudence.

There sometimes occur in war, cases of extremity that change the ordinary aspect of objects, and in which a prudent man may be called to deviate from the exactness of established

rules: it may be even necessary to push resolution to the borders of temerity. The only resource of the vanquished, is often in despair*. A daring intrepidity, in such cases, becomes a mark of wisdom:—not but it is highly proper to take into consideration the *possibility* of an event; yet something must be left to *fortune*, and it is right to resolve and act with promptitude where there is no other than a choice between what is bad and what is worst. Enterprises that are indispensable, in situations of extreme emergence, must be resolved on and executed almost at the same moment; for in such cases, to wait for weighing and examining the obstacles, would effectually annihilate all offensive and active operations.

THE French, Bavarians, and Saxons, in their passage into Bohemia, were not able to arrive before Prague till toward the end of November. The season was remarkably severe. An army, which was then only at five leagues distance, marched to the relief of the place. On this, count Saxe changed his operations; and determined to commence and to finish the siege in one night, by opening the trenches and storming the town. Thus, while two vigorous attacks were

* "*Una salus victis—nullam sperare salutem.*" VIRG.

made, which drew the greatest part of the garrison to those spots, the scaling-ladders were fixed, and the town taken by assault.

PRUDENCE therefore, though the great and indispensable quality in the character of a general, should be susceptible of yielding, on proper occasions, to a certain degree of daring, or even of temerity.—When George the Second proposed giving the command of the expedition against Quebec to General Wolfe, great objections were raised by some of the ministers; and the duke of Newcastle, in particular, begged his majesty to consider that the man was actually mad. "If he be," answered the king, "I wish he would bite some of my generals."

THE count of Harcourt, with an army of eight thousand men, attacked that of the Spaniards, consisting of twenty thousand, at Quiers in Piedmont, and defeated them. The Spanish general, having dispatched a trumpet to him for an exchange of prisoners, sent him word also that if he were king of France he would order his head to be cut off, for having engaged an army so much superior in numbers to his own. "And if I were king of Spain," replied the count, "I would order your head to be cut off, for not having beaten an army so much inferior to yours."

LETTER XXIX.

ON SECRECY AND DISTRUST.

THERE is nothing of greater importance in military operations than secrecy. Never suffer the exultation in the hoped-for success, nor apprehension, nor familiarity, nor affection, to induce you to communicate a knowledge of your design, or of the enterprise with which you are entrusted, to persons who ought not to be made acquainted with it. On the contrary, it is your duty to confide it to those only whom you are obliged to employ in the execution of it. Again: it is not necessary to disclose the whole of your plan at first; but you may unfold it by degrees, as the different stages of its progress require. Secrecy consists no less in saying nothing, than in dissembling our real intentions. It has been remarked of many persons, that while they observe silence, they have either by their countenance or their actions betrayed the secrets of their hearts. Polybius requires us to restrain even our thoughts, lest our actions should disclose what is passing within us. Peter the Third

of Arragon replied to one of his officers, who, on an occasion of importance, questioned him respecting the reason of certain movements, that "if his clothes could tell what then occupied his mind, he would burn them." This sentiment has been frequently repeated as a maxim by politicians.

THE prince of Orange, in the midst of those misfortunes which were about to overwhelm his country, had sufficient fortitude and elevation of mind to form the design of offensive operations against France. His first measures were taken against Charleroi. He was in full march for the execution of this enterprise, of which no one had the least suspicion, when an officious colonel had the insolence to question him upon what steps he was about to take. "But," said the prince, "if you know my designs, you will promise to communicate them to no one?" "Assuredly," answered the colonel. "Heaven," rejoined the prince, "has given me also the capacity of keeping a secret."

WHEN the project of a general has been once divulged, it very soon comes to the knowledge of the soldiers. He must be either a fool or a madman, that will discover his plans beforehand: for besides the inconveniences which may

often arise in the execution of them, there is great danger that the enemy may become acquainted with them; as it often happens that the hope of a large reward will induce a soldier to desert, to communicate the intelligence.

You are indebted for the reflections contained in the present Letter, to the natural frankness and openness of your own character. It is painful, I confess, to urge you to a distrust of those with whom you may be connected; and this disposition, when carried to a certain length, is a great evil in society. In war however it is an indispensable quality, and at times may be allowed to its fullest extent. Frankness and sincerity are the certain indications of a mind which, a stranger to duplicity in itself, never suspects it in another. This easiness may do you much injury in the world; and therefore you must be constantly on your guard. In your intercourse with men in society, know something of the persons in whom you place your confidence. It is, I lament to say, only after an acquaintance of years, and a long familiarity, that you can fully know the character of those to whom you may be allowed to entrust the secrets of your heart. In matters relating to war, it is your duty to confide in no one; without excepting

those even whose fidelity you have the longest proved.

THERE are two motives which ought to influence you to the indulgence of this unqualified distrust of those around you. In the first place, because upon it depends the interest not only of your fortune, but of your honour, which I wish you ever to consider as the most sacred and invaluable of all possessions. Secondly, because it is not on your own account that you make war, but on account of your country and your king, whose interests you are not allowed to endanger. What would you not have to answer for, if, having communicated an important secret to a traitor whom you supposed your friend, he should disclose it! or even to an intimate, who might, without any intention of injury, betray you through inadvertence or indiscretion! Not that I would by any means wish you to consider all men without distinction, as traitors and deceitful. I am far from thinking, with a modern writer, that "all men live as if they had made an agreement together to deceive, to injure, and to destroy, one another: a tacit agreement; and though not acknowledged, yet an almost general one." Never entertain an opinion so dishonourable to humanity. There

are many treacherous characters; happily, however, these are far from being the majority: but among open and generous natures the greater part are so free and unreserved, that if they do any mischief by their disclosures, it is without design, though still it must not be forgotten, that the evil may be as great as if dictated by the worst motives; hence the distrust which I have enjoined is essential with the one as well as the other.

LETTER XXX.

OF GUIDES, SPIES, AND DESERTERS.

IT is proper continually to consult the people of the country where a war is carried on; to listen to them attentively; and on no account to manifest impatience at their tedious details. An intelligent officer will sometimes derive advantage from circumstances the most minute; and in not attending to these, will risk the missing of others which are of more consequence. Gustavus Adolphus used to say, that the most skilful general might fail in the execution of his best-concerted projects, if he neglected to avail himself of the knowledge of the inhabitants of the country he made war in. They are fully acquainted with the secret turnings and bearings of places which may be favourable for stratagem or artifice; means which are more effectual than open force, which prevent the sacrifice of lives, and which always evince the genius and the talents of him who is able to employ them.

IT is almost impossible for an individual of-

ficer, charged with the command of a detachment, to act with security, without employing spies, or by some other means gaining secret intelligence from the enemy. A great master of the art of war says, that there are few advantages we cannot better spare than spies. If you employ several, great care should be taken that they have no communication with one another; and that they be not known as such in their corps. You must be cautious to speak to them separate, and that they are on no occasion brought together.

SHOULD a spy from your adversary's army be conducted to you, take him aside privately; interrogate him with mildness; speak to him with a sort of confidence; on no account threaten him; and promise to reward him if he will faithfully disclose what he knows of the enemy. If you find him a man of intelligence, engage him in your service. If you are able to gain him over to your interest (which is only to be done by bribing him liberally), you may derive great advantage from such an accession; but you must be careful not to employ him till you are well assured of his fidelity, and even then under the strictest precautions.

ALWAYS mistrust a deserter that comes over

with a promise of disclosing secrets of importance. If however one should propose to you the means of surprising the enemy, and should offer to conduct you by secret roads, and mentions the fit moment for the enterprise, it is the duty of an intelligent officer to weigh well the circumstances of the project. If, on the whole, he deems it probable, he secures the person of the spy; and conducts him along with him, bound hand and foot, with the promise of liberty and a handsome reward if he has told the truth, or immediate death if otherwise. The spy that thus sees his life in your hands, will not be likely to deceive you; for he will immediately calculate that his destruction is much more certain than the success of his deception.

If you take a guide in a village, treat him with kindness, and do not suffer your soldiers to insult or ill use him: converse with him on the road; much information is sometimes gathered from persons of this description. If you are in an enemy's country, and are compelled to march during the night, as the fidelity of this man is always to be suspected, you must expect he will seek to escape from you; and that he may do this with ease, especially if you have a wood to traverse. It will be proper then to secure his

person by the strictest means. You must threaten him with the severest punishment, if he does not conduct you where and in what manner you desire, or if he leads you into any ambush or snare.

AN officer ought to admit every one who comes to him with intelligence; and should be accessible at all hours, whether by night or by day, at table or in bed. Those who are of difficult approach, either of themselves or through their servants, expose themselves to the risk of missing information which might have been of the greatest importance, and which delay may render ineffectual.

ALEXANDER, when engaged far from his own country, where all dispatches were a long time in reaching him, refused, says Quintus Curtius, to listen to a poor peasant, who offered to show him a much shorter route. He soon repented of his weakness; and sent afterward to seek the man, but in vain.

LETTER XXXI.

ON TACTICS.

VIEWING then War in the light which I before suggested*, it cannot be but considered as the most useful as well as the most necessary of all the sciences; and it impresses the mind at the same time with the idea of a variety of requisite attainments, which can be acquired only by the utmost attention. In most other sciences the principles are fixed and clear; diligence and care alone are necessary to comprehend them, and common talents to act on them. Most men, even of circumscribed abilities, can retain a set of principles, and are able to apply them, and commonly to trace their natural dependences and consequences. It is not thus, however, in the art of war. The utmost assiduity is scarcely equal for acquiring an insight sufficient to apply justly the principles to circumstances as they arise.

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* In the first Letter of this Volume.

THIS difficulty is occasioned by the uncertainties and variations to which the very nature of war as a science is liable. The immensity of objects which it embraces, and which all depend upon an infinite number of contingences, together with the complexity of its details and combinations, have been supposed to create an impossibility of establishing with any precision and permanence its axioms.

THE Greeks, our masters in the art of war, were so convinced of the necessity of a theory, and the insufficiency of practice alone, that they instituted public schools, where they taught upon fixed principles and rules the science of war. The Spartans were the first who formed their tactics into a regular system to be taught as a part of education. Other nations imitated the Greeks: they did not indeed erect military academies, but they employed the most skilful professors to teach this art.

THE manner of arranging troops and of training them to the different military evolutions, was properly what the ancient Greeks distinguished by the name of Tactics.

ÆNEAS, after Ælian, defined tactics "the science of military movements;" and Polybius, whose works on the Greek tactics are lost, calls

it, "the art of training a number of men destined for soldiers, arranging them in ranks and files, and instructing them in every thing connected with war." The men who taught these principles, and these regulations, either in the schools or by writing, and the officers who displayed the practice of them in their manœuvres, were called tacticians.

PRINCES and states maintained, at the public expence, these masters of tactics, for instructing in the theory those young men who devoted themselves to the profession of arms. There were at Pella, the capital of Macedon, a vast number of tacticians, who enjoyed very lucrative establishments. This liberality of the sovereign did not a little contribute to the glory which was acquired by the Macedonians.

WE see by Arrian's work on tactics, that the Greeks reduced the whole of this science to calculation and rule. This precision carried the military art among them at once to a high degree of perfection. Their officers, accurately versed in the detail of every evolution, and of all the properties of the phalanx, distinguished with ease in their practice the good and the useful from what was only speculation.

THOUGH the Greeks made their tactics the

basis of the science of war according to the examples given by their masters in the schools, yet they considered this as composing but a small proportion of the acquirements necessary to a general. The art of commanding an army was justly considered as a most important part of knowledge, and was taught accordingly; this embraced all the grand objects connected with war. Dionysidorus, who flourished in the time of Socrates, came to Athens and set up there as a master in this art. No works have reached our time by which we can determine the progress which the ancients made in this comprehensive study. But the books of these military professors existed at the time of those writers who, under the reigns of the emperors, treated on this subject; and to these we are indebted for the little we know of their predecessors.

It does not appear however that the lessons of these teachers were universally considered with unreserved deference. Hannibal thought meanly of the generality of the professors; and ridiculed one of them, who with a pencil and a tablet in his hand had the assurance to debate with him upon the operations of war.

PYRRHUS has commonly been considered as one of the greatest masters in the military art.

He wrote both on tactics and on the knowledge of commanding armies, and his works on these subjects were extant in the time of Plutarch. Even Hannibal did not hesitate to speak of Pyrrhus as the most learned and the greatest captain that had ever existed. To him is ascribed the invention of the small wooden figures, made use of by tacticians to exhibit, and to illustrate on a table, all the different movements of an army*.

THE Romans, who trod in the steps of the Greeks, had also a system of tactics, the rules of which are preserved to us in their writings. It does not appear that they had among them schools and professors of tactics: but there can be no doubt that their generals were formed by private instructions; and it is certain that they acted upon a regular system, which directed all their military enquiries.

* A COMPLETE set of these figures, which are now brought to a high degree of perfection, and admirably adapted to our latest tactical system, may be had (with short directions for their use) at a small expence, from the military booksellers in the neighbourhood of the Horse Guards. Those for the infantry, in a slight wooden box, take up only the room of a moderate-sized book: and may be exercised on a common breakfast table.

LET us now turn our attention to our own times.—The art of war has been rather rendered universal than perfected, among all nations who confine their pains to copying from and imitating each other. The defects of general causes however are sometimes corrected by the operation of particular ones. Thus long wars give necessarily a practical knowledge which, in many cases, takes place of theory; and there are no troops that will not, in such circumstances, be able to push their conquests under a skilful commander who knows how to direct them by the superiority of his genius, and to avail himself, from his experience, of all the resources of his art.

MANY are the advantages to be derived from examining the causes both of victory and defeat: for the success of the conqueror is commonly but the result of the errors of the conquered; and if war be not a mere game of hazard, the event of a battle must necessarily depend (supposing the bravery of each party equal) on the observance or the omission of the rules of tactics.

THE higher branches of tactics should be thoroughly understood by all general officers; but it is sufficient for the inferior officers and soldiers, to be acquainted with the evolutions. Not

that the latter are beneath the notice of generals: but having already acquired a knowledge of these, they ought to direct their attention more immediately to the former; carefully attaining at the same time a clear apprehension of every species of military detail, and thereby obviating the many inconveniences and embarrassments which occur from orders being aukwardly expressed by the general, and of course ill understood by the inferior officer. It may be laid down as a certain rule, that unless a general officer makes himself acquainted with particular movements and dispositions, and preserves the necessary recollections, it is impossible for him to be clear and correct in his arrangements.

Of all mechanical operations founded on given principles, the art of war is certainly the most compendious, the most enlarged, and the most capable of improvement. Almost every other science and art is comprehended in it; and it should be the chief study, and the ultimate object, of a general's reflections. He must not be satisfied with a limited conception of its various branches; he should go deeply into all its parts, aware of its manifold changes, and know how to adapt movements and positions to circumstances and places.

THUS it will be of little use to a commander to have formed vast projects, if, when they are to be executed, there should be a deficiency of ground; if the general movements of the army should be embarrassed by the irregularity of some particular corps, by the overlapping each other, &c.; and if, through the tardiness of a manœuvre, an enemy should have time to render the plan abortive by a more prompt evolution. A good general must be aware of all these contingences, by making himself thoroughly master of tactics.

FORMERLY in the British service every commander in chief, or officer commanding a corps, adopted or invented such manœuvres as he judged proper, except in the instance of a few regulations for review; neither the manual exercise, nor quick and slow marching, was precisely defined by authority. In consequence, when regiments from different parts of the kingdom were brigaded, they were unable to act in line till the general officer commanding had established some temporary system to be observed by all under his orders. These inconveniences were at length obviated by the "Rules and Regulations" compiled by General David Dundas on the system

of the Prussian discipline, as established by Frederic the Great.

THOUGH we seem in this instance, to stand indebted to a foreign power for an entire change of field tactics, it has been confidently asserted, that the system which the king of Prussia brought into universal notice, was that which was practised by the British troops under the duke of Marlborough; and that the Germans, with whom we were then in alliance, adopted most of their manœuvres from us.

In the execution of the manœuvres constant reference must be had to real action, where no time must be expended in unnecessary movements. The more simple a manœuvre is, the more useful it is likely to be in the presence of an enemy. It is therefore highly important that all the movements should be regulated with an eye to practical utility; and on principles which, though the detail of them be sometimes necessarily altered by change of situation or of circumstances, will remain in their nature and foundation the same. The order of battle which is the most simple, and the soonest formed, ought always to be considered as the best, and the only one that can be adopted and applied with safety in a time of actual war.

LETTER XXXII.

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF TACTICS IN THE PRINCIPAL CONTINENTAL ARMIES.

THE subject of this Letter will be, the present state of Tactics in the principal European armies. For this, I shall chiefly have recourse to a recent foreign author, whom indeed I may justly copy with but little variation.

THE French revolution has operated on the continent of Europe in a degree unprecedented in the annals of history. During the last twenty years, every thing has undergone a great and important change, whether in politics or religion: old states have been dissolved, and new ones established. France, like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up whatever came within her reach.

AMONG other changes, the military science has assumed a new aspect during the above period; and the tactics of a Turenne, a Marlborough, or a Frederic, have been obliged to give way to French republican enthusiasm, animating their armies *en masse*. Their columns have forced the almost impenetrable cordons of the

Austrians in the plains of Germany and Italy, and outrivalled the passage of Hannibal over the Alps. Other nations have been under the necessity of new-modelling their armies, and changing the established system of tactics, in hopes of being able to counteract that of the enemy.

The French revolution disorganised the military of that nation; and the ancient officers who did not embrace the new principles, either retired, emigrated, or were assassinated. To them succeeded men raised from the ranks, or those who gave proofs of attachment to the new order of things. The army was composed of troops of the line without order, and of raw and unexperienced volunteers. They suffered defeats in the beginning, but the war in the mean time was training both officers and soldiers. The system of terror introduced by Robespierre, also concurred in forming the army, and leading it to victory.

The French generals early discovered the advantages resulting from dispatch; which is, besides, peculiarly adapted to a people impatient and greedy of novelties. The alertness of the soldiers, the lightness of their baggage, and their inattention to order, enable the French armies to execute their movements with celerity

In an open country, their armies were formed in columns, instead of lines, which could not be preserved without difficulty. They reduced their battles to attacks on certain points. Brigade succeeded brigade, and fresh troops supplied the place of those who were driven back, which enabled them to force the post, and make the enemy retreat before them: keeping themselves solid, the cavalry could not break them. Turenne, Condé, and their imitators, had carried on a war of movements; next came that of sieges. Frederic the Great had introduced a system of tactics and manœuvres, which he had brought to perfection. The French, fully aware that they could not give battles in regular order, sought to reduce the war to important affairs of posts; which has succeeded.

When the war was carried into rugged or mountainous countries, the use of the close column was found impossible. To act in such situations with vigour, they formed *eclaireurs*,* sharp-shooters, light-infantry, and *chasseurs*. More than once their sharp-shooters have decid-

* A sort of scouts, and formerly called *batteurs d'estrade*; to lead the army, make fires, guard the flanks in passing defiles, and prevent ambuscades

ed actions of importance. When checked and repulsed, they fall back on the column; which receives them, and in its turn attacks the enemy, or sustains his shock.*

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* When the revolution broke out into such excesses, says another writer, that many of the most respectable of the French officers, of all ranks, could no longer, with consistency, or even safety, remain in the country, the army was left in, a great degree, without commanders; and other officers were appointed, frequently by the choice of the soldiers themselves, who having almost to a man, been by various artifices gained over to favour the new order of things, naturally selected such officers from their body as had shown the greatest attachment to the cause which was considered to be that of the whole nation and of each individual in it.—These new-chosen officers were, of course, obliged, perhaps against their inclination, to purchase the continuance of the favour of their fellow-soldiers, by compliance, which, if not always criminal, were at least subversive of all subordination and discipline. That they were, almost to a man, utterly ignorant of the principles of war, in any other respect than as private soldiers or non-commissioned officers might be supposed to have picked up a little experience, it is unnecessary to observe.

Such, in general, was the condition of the troops of the line, or ancient regular army of France. But the case was infinitely worse, when these regulars came to be united in the field with the volunteers, or *national guards*, as they were termed: not that these volunteers were un-

The French battalions have no field-pieces attached to them. The excellence of their flying-

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acquainted with the use of arms, or even ignorant of actual service; for, according to the military system adopted in France up to the epoch of the revolution, soldiers were enlisted for a limited time, eight years; at the expiration of which they were entitled to their discharge, with certain honorary privileges. If they chose to renew their engagement for another term of eight years, they received an increase of pay; and at the end of the third engagement, or twenty-four years, they received a medallion, or badge of honour, as a public proof of their good behaviour. The consequence of this wise regulation was, that there was scarcely a young man in France who had not borne arms, and *roulé*, as he called it; that is, travelled over a great part of the kingdom, learned the military life in their numerous garrisons as well as in country quarters, and acquired a share of that high point of honour on which an old French soldier, as well as his officer, particularly prided himself.

The national guards were therefore sufficiently accustomed to military exercises: but being intoxicated with the wild notions (then spreading over the kingdom) of *liberty*, by whose sacred and venerable name every species of licentiousness was covered; and of *equality*, which overthrew all justice between man and man; it was utterly impossible to restrain them within those bounds of order and discipline, without a due regard to which no association of men, civil or military, can for a moment subsist.

When the armies took the field, it was common to

artillery amply compensates for this: it is composed of the flower of the French soldiers, who

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have one-fourth only composed of the old troops of the line, and the other three-fourths of volunteers, or national guards. Jealousies soon, from the natural petulance and impatience of the French temper, broke out between these discordant materials of the army. The troops of the line claimed the post of honour, and all other distinctions to which they had been accustomed: their claims were obstinately resisted by the national guards, and it was not without the most skilful management and most decided conduct, that the commanders of these armies were able to restrain the animosities which, on all occasions, threatened to break out into ruinous excesses.

Such was nearly the situation of the infantry; that of the cavalry was, if possible, worse; for the emigration in that part of the army had been proportionally greater than in the infantry. They were, however, less exposed to be corrupted by an admixture of national guards who, for many reasons, were in preference incorporated with the infantry.

The French artillery-men were extremely expert, but they could not be expected to be scientific. This deficiency was however, in a great measure compensated by their spirit, their steadiness, and their numbers, which latter were prodigiously increased.

That, with an army so composed, the French generals should have ventured to cope with the Austrian and Prussian forces, in the open field, was scarcely to be expected: that they should be successful against such foes,

expose themselves with intrepidity. The best generals of the republic have attributed their

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is astonishing. Without at all attempting to explain any of the secret causes of these successes (for secret causes have been assigned), it may just be observed, that they were principally owing to the universal and energetic spirit of resistance, excited all over the country, by the threats publicly held out by their external enemies, and particularly the very extraordinary manifesto which was said to issue from the Prussian army. In the feelings of the French, at such a juncture, all nations must sympathise: but none so much as our own. We have been long in the full possession of those inestimable blessings, of which they could only form a distant hope. Our rights and liberties have been secured beyond assault, while theirs were still only the imaginary objects of their sanguine wishes. If the unhappy French (destined, it would seem, to be the sport of despotism, of one form or other, and indeed incapable of being controlled and governed by any other means) resisted with alacrity and success an invasion by their neighbours; the unanimous indignation with which this country has prepared to repel the attacks of a nation composed of tyrants and slaves, will not appear a wonder.

But whatever patriotic zeal, spirit, and courage, the new armies of France might possess, still it would have been a miracle indeed, if they had been qualified to commit themselves and their cause in the field of battle, on the principles of manœuvring and other branches of modern tactics, against such masters in the art as the Prus-

success to its boldness and celerity of movement; by which it supplies the place of that quantity of artillery which generally burdens armies.

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sians and the Austrians. And it is here that the French commanders evinced their skill and ability. The Prussians had been formed, and many of them had conquered, under the great Frederic. He, it is true, was no more; but still they fought under the eye of their sovereign, and were led on by the generals of the first reputation in Europe. Conscious of their inferiority in the art of the tactician, the French commanders adopted a plan by which the skill and expertness of their enemies were rendered in a great measure useless:—

Instead of drawing up their troops according to either the Direct or the Oblique order of battle, properly so called, they threw their men into deep columns, which they pushed on against the enemy's line; forming several points of attack, which they chose according to circumstances, and against which the enemy could never be well prepared. In these partial attacks, the French columns being animated by every motive, and supported by countless numbers, whose lives were most lavishly (and indeed wantonly) expended, it was no wonder that the enemy were broken in various places, and thrown into such confusion as generally ended in a defeat. Thus, by deep columns, and by their prodigious numbers, the French were often enabled to occupy such an extent of ground as to threaten to enclose the enemy on both flanks, and thereby utterly to disconcert all his arrangements, whether of an offensive or defensive kind. They also, on many occa-

It is a constant maxim, to have a body of reserve in all the French armies; composed of their best troops, and commanded by an able general. If the two lines are beaten, the reserve covers their retreat. The precipitancy with which the French retire without observing order, would be fatal in its consequences, if the reserve did not cover: on more than one occasion, as at Marengo, the reserve snatched the victory out of the hands of the enemy. It also supports them in pursuing, and enables the light troops to secure a greater number of prisoners.

Many examples of success have originated from hints given by the soldiery. This is very

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sions, brought into the field such a quantity of artillery, both fixed and flying, as in a great degree to decide the fate of the engagement, before the troops came to close: and by generally *attacking* the enemy, even when advantageously posted, they not only reaped all the benefits which commonly attend an attacking army, but embraced that mode of warfare which most peculiarly suited their natural character, especially when elevated to the highest pitch of enthusiasm and patriotic zeal. In this way only, can we account for the billiant success which commonly attended the arms of France in the beginning of the revolution. Many local and other causes might, no doubt, be assigned in addition to these.

conspicuous in the French, and their generals often make use of them.

Topography is carried to a great height among both officers and soldiers in the republican army. Whatever post a detachment occupies, they instantly reconnoitre it attentively, instead of lying lazily on the earth; by which means they form their several plans of attack or defence. If they are attacked, they have the incalculable advantages of knowing the ground, and of being instructed beforehand in what is proper to be done.

If any grand operation is in agitation, every body is prepared; the orders are general, and in their substance point out the object which the commander has in view; every officer, every soldier, is as much interested in its success, as if the plan were his own. The generals in chief confide the execution of their operations to their subordinate officers. The battles are in fact but an union of several engagements that take place by separate divisions or brigades. They make it a point to keep their troops in constant movement and enterprise, with the hope of meeting some favourable occurrence; they care little about the sufferings and loss of individuals. When they are threatened, or when they wish to engage, they concentrate all their forces on the principal

point; they push this method even to temerity, in exposing themselves in every other part.

The French in 1799, when they were beaten at all points, began to be ridiculed: they have since become dreadful. If however we could separate the advantages which they have acquired by means of armistices, capitulations and treaties (which with them are never any thing more than perfidious truces) the successes obtained by their troops will be very greatly reduced. Their battles have often been disadvantageous to them —witness that of Marengo; their negotiations always favourable—witness the armistice that followed it. Their adversaries ought to remember that the French are more dangerous when they treat than when they fight. Superiority of numbers, revolutionary activity, cunning, and consummate hypocrisy, have rendered the French triumphant; while their opponents' allies have been disunited, jealous of one another, and have alternately proved oppressors and oppressed.

The good-fortune of Buonaparte, and the faults of his antagonists, delivered Piedmont to him, and opened the road to Lombardy. Astonishment and terror went before him. The happy boldness with which he had passed the Po, at Placenza, and the Adda, at Lodi, paved the

way to his successes, and covered the faults he had committed in proceeding to Milan rather than to Mantua. The multitude are dazzled by great events, and ascribe to the authors of them what in reality is but the work of fortune. As to any thing else, it is solely with regard to the *measure* of Buonaparte's talents that we can reasonably have a doubt: to refuse him his share of genuine military abilities, would be as absurd as to give him the whole merit of what fortune has done for him.

In Germany, Moreau drew nearer to the ancient method of warfare. Trained and instructed by Pichegru, one of the greatest captains in France, Moreau imitated his master, in giving more order and regularity to his plans. The military character of Moreau was different from that of the other French generals: there was less boldness and fire, but more talent, method, and science, in it*. His moral rule of

* On Moreau's return to Paris, after the convention of Hohenlinden was signed, Buonaparte received him in the presence of the foreign ambassadors and of many French generals, and said to him—"General Moreau, you have made the campaign of a consummate and great captain, while mine has been only that of a young and fortunate man." The truth and justness of this remark on,

conduct, and his political character, have given a lustre to his military achievements.

The French generals, like rich and bold gamesters, are incessantly tempting fortune; they look upon their losses as nothing, provided they succeed in the end. The little value which they set upon their men, the certainty of being able to replace them, the personal ambition of their chiefs, and the customary superiority of their numbers, afford them an advantage which cannot be counteracted but by great skill, conduct, and activity.

In reflecting on the operations of the French, we discover no regular military science, except in the campaigns of Pichegru, and of Moreau, who imitated him; all the others display only boldness, activity, sagacity, and finesse. Their knowledge consists, as I before remarked, in attacking on certain points, and, above all, in hanging upon the flanks, and in marching forward. The French have not been accustomed to use real stratagem, at least such as an able and upright general would avow.

THE appearance altogether of an AUSTRIAN

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military man either of the present or any future age can deny.

army presents a magnificent spectacle to military eyes. Marshal Lascy is the author of the system which placed the House of Austria in a situation to maintain, with vigour and perseverance, a long, tedious, and bloody contest.

The Austrians possess that system of tactics which had hitherto been so much dreaded by the French, and which rests wholly upon discipline, science, and order. It has been seen by the examination I have just made, that the properties of the French armies are different. The French soldiers are impetuous; their courage requires something to excite it, and movement to keep up its ardour. Their attack is more violent: but they are not, like the Austrians, able to sustain a regular and open fire from the line; they have not that moral and physical immobility which, without being affected, can see whole ranks swept off by the cannon. The courage of the French is less constitutional than artificial: emulation and vanity are its most powerful incentives; honour, example, and habit, keep it up to its proper pitch.

The light troops of the House of Austria became famous in the wars of 1740 and 1757; but marshal Lascy converted them almost into regular battalions. They ceased being excellent

light troops, without becoming *regular* ones. All this proceeded from his wish to have an uniform army, which he rendered too heavy by depriving it of the light-infantry.

The absolute inferiority of this part of the Austrian force is particularly manifest in mountain contests. The defeats of 1795 and 1796, in the mountains of Genoa; their ill success in the hereditary provinces in 1797; the considerable losses they experienced in the Grison country in 1799; the overthrow of the same army at Zurich, and their incredible disasters in the mountains of Nice, in 1800, evince the inferiority of the Austrians in this kind of service. The archduke Charles himself made but inconsiderable and slow advances, and every step he took was at the expence of extraordinary bloodshed, whenever he fought among mountains. All this might have turned out otherwise, if they had had a good light-infantry.

The Austrians in their mode of fighting preserved their rank and file, while the French riflemen annoyed them, and endeavoured to produce dismay and confusion, until they were at length overwhelmed with fatigue, thrown into disorder, and either dispersed or laid down their arms. The instant the ranks are broken, the Austrians

become like a flock of sheep, scattered, and incapable of being re-united: they carry their fear of being out-flanked to a degree which is ridiculous and extravagant; it might indeed be called a national disorder or weakness.

Their artillery is excellent: but instead of being an accessary, it is sometimes made a principal; instead of aiding the troops, the troops are obliged to guard and defend it, and render themselves subservient to the difficulties of its movements. Their care to guard their cannon, and the dangerous point of honour in preserving what ought to be considered only as the tools or instruments of war, have on more than one occasion, caused the defeat of the Austrian infantry: this might have been avoided, had they either had no cannon, or consented to lose it.

Their cavalry is proverbially good. The French always avoided coming in contact with it.

The Austrian army altogether is as much superior to the French army, as the French soldier is, individually, to the Austrian soldier. Give it an Achilles, and the Austrian army will be the lance of Achilles; such has it been under the archduke Charles.

The Austrians employ an enormous quantity

of troops in what they call a chain of posts, and in guards of every kind, which are frequently useless. One part of their force is at a distance from the battle, and the other is always beaten before the battle is begun; and sometimes this part constitutes the half of their army. Never does the whole of their troops, as might be done upon any other system, take part in the engagement; the reserve, if there be any, is so distributed, and at such a distance, that the different corps are beaten and overthrown without having been able to keep themselves together. The method to which the Austrians invariably attach themselves in all cases, occasions this injurious distribution of their force, and of course weakens them.

Their generals have committed the grossest and most fatal blunders: the French too have been guilty of flagrant errors on their side. I have already shown, in discussing the state of the French army, that a superiority, not of military science, but of intelligence, joined to their great activity and their corps of reserve, has uniformly rescued the French from the ill effects of temporary overthrow.

The continuation of the same faults, in which the Austrians will infallibly persevere, must of

necessity cause the House of Austria to yield, whenever it has to struggle singly against the French. These faults have taken such deep root in their army, that the archduke Charles is the only person who, from his services, talents, and birth (which ought to raise him above all invidious contravention), and from the love and confidence of the army, can animate this grand piece of mechanism, and by giving life to it, enable it to act of itself; instead of being touched by a single spring, which cannot produce the necessary movements with that promptitude and vigour that are indispensably necessary to success.

THE RUSSIANS, in their tactics, profess to be disciples of the Prussian school; but they have done no military wonders since the time of Suwarrow. I shall not presume to give an account of his exploits, but simply to relate several traits which history may not have been able to collect.

Any person who had not been previously acquainted with the victories of Suwarrow, that should see a little old man, clothed only in a shirt, or a pair of drawers, going either on foot or horseback, bare-headed through rain or the heat of the sun, in the midst of the army,

would take him for a low follower of the camp. Such however was Suwarrow. An intrepidity superior to all dangers, a prompt and active genius, and unlimited devotion to his prince's interests, made the marshal one of the greatest men of his time. Never did a general so entirely possess the confidence of his troops; and this was natural, for victory had never yet abandoned him. Suwarrow had formed his tactics from the war which he conducted against the Turks; he had the same confidence in his soldiers that they placed in him. The Russians had the ascendency over the Turks: so much so, that it was Suwarrow's custom to anticipate the furious attack of those enemies by attacking them himself; he sought, upon all occasions, to come up with them, being well persuaded that the valour of his troops would make him victorious. He had not, perhaps, sufficiently considered, that the French, though they resemble the Turks in the violence of their attacks, are nevertheless capable of performing their movements with greater facility.

The Russian soldier is deficient in instruction rather than intelligence: the servile obedience to which he is accustomed from his birth, the rigorous discipline of the army, and his ab-

solute separation from all other nations (whose language and manners are totally unknown to him), make him more obedient to his officers, and more patient and hardy, than the soldier of any other service. Courage is the general characteristic, it is the faith and creed, of the Russian soldier. Implicit obedience occasions in him the same effects that enthusiasm does in other nations. The effect which servitude produces, is, in this instance, the same with that of the most ardent patriotism; it is more sure and durable than that of enthusiasm, the artificial warmth of which cannot be long kept up. Thus, what by philosophers is called the last state of degradation, places man on the same level with heroism. The Russian soldiers do not conceive it possible to give up the contest so long as they have life to continue it. The officers are, in general, very ignorant; and for this reason strangers are in high esteem among them: they are brave in the field, but, like the soldiers, they are so from the effect of discipline. The same horror is conceived in the Russian army at cowardice, as is entertained in other countries against irreligion and villany. Bravery is a duty, from which nobody considers himself exempt. A Russian camp resembles a

horde of Tartars. In the same manner that a people accustomed to obey the laws, mechanically observe them, so do the Russians constantly follow the rules of discipline, without daring to depart from them.

Suwarrow not only excelled all other generals in the management of his soldiers, but was considered as an inspired man. Those who saw nothing in the mummery of the marshal but weakness or burlesque, might look upon him as a buffoon or a madman: but this madness was the madness of Ulysses. It was thus Numa persuaded the Romans, that the goddess Egeria imparted to him, in interviews, the laws which he gave them. Thus Scipio had a good genius which warned him of events, and Sertorius a hind which inspired him.

The Russian soldiers were persuaded that their general had intercourse with superior beings, and conversed during the night with angels. They could not be overcome—led on, as they were, by a man who communed with the inhabitants of heaven. Suwarrow however could not deceive them; the victory depended upon them, and upon their courage. This persuasion in the soldiers was sufficient to ensure victory; and they have always obtained it with him. If

the tricks that Suwarrow played, were the most proper means of giving his army a conviction of his being inspired, they cease to be ridiculous, and, on the contrary, become wisdom. Under this impression, we are almost disposed to admire that man for the ingenuity of his influence over the human mind, whom we were before inclined to look upon as a madman.

Suwarrow was old, and subject to the infirmities of age, when he came into Italy, as far as they affected the body; but his spirit preserved all its fire and vivacity. Every thing in his manner was singular and eccentric. He kissed the hands of those persons whom he received, and sometimes even their cheeks and mouth. A mountebank does not display so many tricks, contorsions, and grimaces, as he did: these were accompanied with signs of the cross, and with prayers. His table was remarkable for its filth and bad cheer; he drank out of his neighbour's glass, and frequently the liquor that was left in it. His head-quarters were more like the tent of a khan of Tartary, than those of the generalissimo of the two imperial armies. Yet, in the midst of all these buffooneries (which, from any other person, would have excited derision and contempt), it was impossible not to

feel the greatest respect for his character, with a mingled sensation of surprise and astonishment. What the bystanders witnessed was in itself extremely ridiculous, and yet did not produce the effect that the sight of any thing ridiculous usually does. Whether it was that reflection presented to their minds the greatness of his exploits, or that they were imposed upon by his simplicity, his followers were not at all tempted to laugh at what was, in fact, extremely ludicrous. When, after all these tricks, he recovered himself, and conversed on war or politics, numberless observations replete with sense, and evincing not only his practical knowledge, but profound theory, especially in matters relative to war, were heard from the mouth of the man, whom, the moment before, we were tempted to look upon as in a state of madness or imbecility.

He had formed his manner after the war against the Turks, and according to the genius of his troops: he was better calculated to give battles than to make campaigns (wherein frequent movements are necessary), or to carry on a war of invasion rather than to act upon the defensive. His tactics consisted principally in coming to issue with the enemy, being persuaded that the valour of his troops would render him

victorious. He was a captain in the style of Mahomet, Tamerlane, and Gengis Khan, rather than of Cesar or Turenne; an Asiatic general, rather than an European; formed to gain battles and conquests, rather than conduct regular campaigns. To go in search of his opponents, and charge them, was the abstract of his military science; but the greatness of his character, and his genius for war, aided him, and ensured the victory to the bravery of his troops.

In fact, one condition only is necessary with such troops as the Russians: which is, that they may not meet with any natural and insurmountable obstacle between themselves and the enemy. At the battle of Novi, the Russians were nearly destroyed in attacking inaccessible heights, that were covered with troops, and fortified with artillery: thrice did they fall back, repulsed, not by the French, but by the nature of their position; and thrice did they form again under the enemy's fire. If general Melas had not turned their right wing, and dislodged the enemy, it appears probable that the Russian army must have perished; but the good-fortune and genius of Suwarrow always extricated him from difficulties. At Zurich, where the marshal was not present, the Russians were overcome, through

the badness of their disposition, the disadvantage of the ground, and from the effects of surprise and misunderstanding; but not from the courage of their enemy. In Holland, they could not conquer canals, dykes, and inundations.—Their method is to charge the enemy with the bayonet, at full speed, crying, *Owri, Owri.* No troops in the world can stand this charge: the firing does not abate their impetuosity; they attack a battery in front, if that is a readier way than to attack it in flank.

To withstand this shock, the enemy must not wait for it, but proceed to meet it with the same resolution. The French are more remarkable for boldness and rashness than for intrepidity: the approach of the long and broad Russian bayonets always alarmed them; their grenadiers could never stand the impression. The courage of the Russians is proof against every thing; they know how to die to ensure victory, and to die rather than be beaten. No troops in the world are so careless of being attacked in flank, or turned; they think, let the enemy be where he will, if they can but face about to meet him, that he is in front and in regular order before them. Even the French, in their campaign in Poland, could not help admiring the steady firmness

of the Russians; and paid them an unfeeling compliment, by declaring that "they received death better than they gave it."

The Russian discipline is extremely rigorous, and has all the ingredients of an autocratical government. The subordination among the officers of different ranks is almost as great as that of private soldiers to their officers in other services; they are even sometimes treated in the same manner as the privates. Their bravery is the effect of discipline, more than of elevated sentiments.

Each company has its hero. This is a distinction which he obtains from the suffrages of his comrades; he has no pre-eminence determined by order, though he has in effect a very great one. He is the example, the model, and the chief of the mess; he enjoys great consideration among his comrades, and never fails to give them an example of bravery, firmness, and good conduct. When men are accustomed to any thing, it is sufficient for one to give an example, to induce the others to follow it: this it is, that renders the hero in question so useful in action. Few persons are capable of setting an example, though almost all are capable of following it.

Every thing seems Gothic in the appearance and military customs of the Russians; this does

not, however, prove any material defect in their organization.

The cavalry is formed after that of the Prussian model. The Cossacks are excellent as camp-guards and for advanced posts. They are easily distinguished as men accustomed to live in vast and desert tracts of land. Without any knowledge of a country or its language, and without guides, they march forward like navigators in newly discovered seas; and discover their way, not only through the high roads, but in traversing unknown parts. They are not capable of fighting in line of battle: and as cavalry, they are of little service; but infinitely useful as light troops, for reconnoitring, for skirmishing, pursuing, and harassing an enemy, or for guarding camps. Their horses are small, and far from handsome; but active, fit to climb any where, and to sustain every species of fatigue. The emperor gives them each twenty-four rubles a year, for themselves and the maintenance of their horses. It will naturally be supposed, that they make no scruple of taking what they want whenever they find it; and in fact, they are great marauders. In general, the Russian troops bear strong marks of the savage origin of the greatest portion of their soldiers*.

* The following general orders, inserted in the Pe-

RECENT events have exhibited a prodigy, little short of an apparent miracle, in military

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tersburg Court Gazette of the 28th of August 1800, afford a good picture (as far as it goes) of the present state of the Russian army, and the spirit which directs the means of its improvement:—

"His Imperial majesty having observed, at the grand field-day of the 9th instant, old style, that the troops of the Finland inspection did not in any respect execute the dispositions they had received; and that the left column reached the assigned spot much sooner than the right; and that under the enemy's fire, without being covered either by horse or chasseurs, it awaited the arrival of the latter, formed by platoons: and that, during the retreat of the squadrons of horse along the front, one battalion fired upon its own cavalry:—Lieutenant-general prince Gortschakow is hereby reprimanded by his Imperial majesty; who moreover observes on this occasion, that a similar non-execution of orders, neglect, and indolence, on the part of the generals, occasioned undoubtedly the loss of the battles in Switzerland and Holland.

"With regard to the troops who this day manœuvred under the orders of major-general baron Dibitich, his Imperial majesty presents each of them, of inferior rank, with a pound of meat and a glass of gin.

"The artillery belonging to the Finland inspection, must, in future, avoid such disorder and confusion as took place this day in the battery commanded by major Nitikin; who, accordingly, is hereby reprimanded.

"Major-general —— is also hereby reprimanded; because his regiment continued to fire, at the time when it was already behind the line of grenadiers.

history. The PRUSSIAN ARMY, the model of servile and ostentatious imitation to the rest of Europe, has been *annihilated at a stroke!* The result of the battle of Jena, which broke the charm that had long exerted its influence over nations, will furnish a subject of interesting speculation to the historian and the philosopher.

A NEW and inauspicious era seems opening on SPAIN, which must produce an entire revolution in the military as well as political establishments of that country.

" His Imperial majesty observes to the generals of the Finland inspection, that he has himself witnessed how much improvement they want to be even generals of moderate abilities; and that, as long as they continue such, they are sure to be beaten every where, and by every one."

LETTER XXXIII.

ON BATTLES.

ALL arrangements of troops in line of battle, are either *direct*, that is to say parallel (or nearly so) to the front of the enemy's line; or *oblique*, that is, inclined to his front, so that if the two lines were to meet, at either extremity, they would form an angle more or less acute.

THE Direct order of battle is the most natural and obvious, the most simple in its disposition and operations, and the most ancient. In proportion, however, as the art of tactics was improved, many important defects were discovered in the direct order: but the principal reason why it is seldom employed, seems to be the difficulty of meeting, in a campaign, a plain so level and so extensive, as to allow two considerable armies to be drawn up in opposite lines the one parallel to the other; and to manœuvre, close, and engage, along their whole front, at the same time. Direct or parallel lines of battle must, besides, be very disadvantageous for any army,

unless the front be but of small extent, and that the commander have a sufficient number of troops in reserve to reinforce such parts of his line as the enemy are liable to break through.

THE Oblique order of battle comprehends every species of disposition of troops, by which they can at pleasure be made to act against one or more points of the enemy's line while the remaining parts of it are kept in check: such troops as are not engaged in these attacks being held back, and beyond the reach of the enemy; by which operation the attacking army seems, in a general sense, to be obliquely inclined, by one or more angles, to that of the enemy. This order is the most scientific, the most artful, and the most perfect of all. "It is this," says the chevalier Folard, "against which a general, however able he may be, can form no opposition, when it is suddenly presented by the enemy: for, to be able to oppose it with due effect, it would be necessary to execute such manœuvres as cannot possibly be performed in the moment of action, since they require much time and previous arrangement, It might, for instance, be requisite to transport the whole left of an army to the right, or the whole right to the left." The parts

of a line with which the partial attack or attacks are to be made, are reinforced beyond the ordinary strength of the line; and the other parts, not engaged, are weakened in proportion as they are removed from the enemy.

THE oblique order is the genuine resource of a weak army. Its principal advantage consists in giving a commander the choice of the point of attack; and in rendering, for some time at least, the enemy's superiority in numbers of no use to them. An army which is forced to engage another much more numerous, ought, above all, to endeavour to outfront it on one of the wings, and to be strong on every point where the enemy may make an attack. By gaining these two grand advantages, and by keeping back the other parts of the line from action, a sort of equality in effective strength will be established between the two armies, the greater portion of the largest being thus rendered of no use in the battle.

FREDERIC the Great, of Prussia, has, of all the moderns, best studied the principles and properties of the oblique order. In his grand encampments and reviews, in time of peace, he showed the mechanism of this order to his generals; and it was by its means that he opened the

way to his numerous victories. The Prussian tactics form an æra in military history*.

The oblique order may be employed against the right, the left, or the centre of the enemy's line, or against any of the intermediate points; but it is generally directed against one of the wings. The great art of arranging this order, is to mask and conceal the design from the enemy; who, being equally apprehensive of an at-

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* The history of Frederic of Prussia, is not less extraordinary than, to military men, encouraging.

His father, Frederic-William I. although passionately devoted to his army, was no warrior; but Frederic was both. His whole reign was employed in augmenting and disciplining his troops. He used to inspect them every year; and at each review he affected to be dissatisfied with certain generals and particular regiments. He reprimanded them severely, although without any just grounds. This he did to keep alive their vigilance, and to prevent even the smallest relaxation of military discipline.

Men of rank, from all quarters, ambitious of military skill and renown, flocked to his reviews, as the great military school of the day. He was the Epaminondas of Europe. As Philip of Macedon sent his son Alexander to be instructed by that philosophical and most accomplished commander, so the youth of illustrious birth and elevated genius, and, among others, the SONS OF KINGS, repaired to Berlin.

tack on every point, cannot weaken one in order to strengthen any other. The way to make an oblique attack miscarry, is to adopt an order contrary to that of the enemy; and to have always a considerable *reserve*, of horse and foot, ready to reinforce the point attacked. It is often of great advantage to employ the oblique order against an enemy who has taken what he considers to be a good position, and there waits for the attack: in such a case he has no fears of being surprised, and from that very confidence is frequently defeated. However inferior a general may be, he never can be utterly defeated if he acts on the oblique order; for as he does not engage the whole front of the enemy, nor even brings into action but a part of his own line, he never can suffer except merely in the points of contact.

It follows from all this, that a general who is obliged to engage an enemy superior to himself in numbers or in the quality of the troops, ought to take such a position as that the enemy cannot attack his whole front at one time. By such a position, he will be saved from a total defeat; but, on the other hand, he will also be prevented from employing his talents, or taking advantage of circumstances, to ruin the enemy, unless this

last destroy his own army by repeated and unsuccessful assaults on such parts as are within his reach.

The centre of each army is generally occupied by the foot: the cavalry form the right and left wing of each line; and sometimes a squadron of horse is posted in the intervals between the battalions. When an army is drawn up in order of battle, the ranks of horse are frequently placed at five feet from each other, and the foot at three. In each line the battalions are distant from each other about 180 feet, which is nearly equal to the extent of their front; and the same rule holds good of the squadrons, which have about 300 feet distance, being the extent of their own front. These intervals are left for the squadrons and battalions of the second line to range themselves against the intervals of the first, that both may more readily march through those spaces to the enemy. The front line is generally about 300 feet from the centre line; and the centre line as much from the rear, or corps of reserve; that there may be sufficient room to rally when the squadrons or battalions are broken.

BATTLES have ever been the last resource of good generals. A situation where chance and

accident often elude and overcome the most prudential and most able arrangements, and where superiority in numbers by no means ensures success, is such as should be never entered into without a clear necessity for so doing. The fighting a battle only because the enemy is near, or from having no other prepared plan of offence, is a mirerable way of making war. Darius lost his crown and life by it: king Harold, of England, did the same; and Francis I. at Pavia, lost the battle and his liberty*. King John of

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* An elegant writer, who has put the following sketch of the battle of Pavia into the mouth of his principal hero in a work of imagination, has nevertheless taken historical truth for the foundation of his narrative.

"FROM Milan Francis (Francis I. of France) proceeded to Pavia. Glory was the idol of his heart; and he was the more powerfully excited to the attack of that place, because it was the strongest and best fortified post in the whole duchy. The more he displayed of military prowess, the more firmly he believed he should fix himself in his newly-acquired dominions; the inhabitants would submit to him the more willingly, and the enemy be less encouraged to enter into a fresh contention for what he had acquired. Such at least were the motives that he assigned for his proceedings: in reality, perhaps he was principally induced by the brilliancy which he conceived would attend on the undertaking.

"The siege of Pavia proved to be a transaction in the

France, fought the battle of Poictiers, though ruin attended his enemy if he had not fought.

I will now transcribe for your amusement

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course of which military honour might well be acquired. It was defended by a small, but veteran garrison, and by one of the ablest captains that Europe at that time possessed. He interrupted the approaches of the besiegers by frequent and furious sallies. In vain, by the aid of our excellent artillery, we made wide and repeated breaches in the fortifications. No sooner did we attempt to enter by the passage we had opened, than we found ourselves encountered by a body composed of the choicest and bravest soldiers of the garrison. The governor of the city, who, though grey-headed and advanced in years, was profuse of every youthful exertion, was ordinarily at the head of this body. If we deferred our attack, or, not having succeeded in it, proposed to recommence it with the dawn of the following day, we were sure to find a new wall sprung up in the room of the other, as if by enchantment. Frequently the governor anticipated the success of our batteries; and the old fortification was no sooner demolished, than we beheld to our astonishment a fresh wall, which his prudence had erected at a small interval within the line of the former.

" The trenches had not been opened before Pavia, till about the beginning of November. The winter overtook us, and the siege was yet in progress; with some apparent advantage indeed on our side, but by no means promising an instant conclusion. The season set in with unusual severity; and both officer and soldier were glad, as much

some account of a few of the most interesting Battles which occur in English history.

The ever-memorable Battle of Hastings,

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as possible, to fence out its rigour by the indulgences of the genial board.

"There were, however, other things to be attended to, beside the demands of conviviality. The king became impatient of the delays of the siege. The garrison and the inhabitants were reduced to great extremities; but the governor discovered no symptoms of a purpose to surrender. In the mean time intelligence was brought that the constable of Bourbon (who was now in rebellion against Francis) was making the most extraordinary exertions in Germany, and promised to bring to the enemy a reinforcement of twelve thousand men from that country; while the Imperial generals, by mortgaging their revenues and pawning their jewels, and still more by their eloquence and influence with those under their command, were able to keep together the remains of a disheartened and defeated army in expectation of his arrival. There was some danger therefore, that if the siege were not speedily terminated, the king might ultimately be obliged to raise it with ignominy, or to fight the enemy under every disadvantage. Francis, however, was not to be deterred from his undertaking. He had sworn a solemn oath, that Pavia should be his, or he would perish in the attempt.

which followed the successful invasion of William duke of Normandy (since called the Conqueror),

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"This circumstanced, he conceived a very extraordinary project. Pavia is defended on one side by the Tesino, the scene of the first of the four famous battles by which Hannibal signalized his invasion of Italy. The king believed, that if this river could by the labour of his army be diverted from its course, the town must instantly fall into his hands. He was encouraged to the undertaking, by recollecting a stratagem of a similar nature by which Cyrus formerly made himself master of the city of Babylon. It was a thought highly flattering to the grandeur of his soul, to imagine that posterity would in this instance parallel him with Cyrus the Great.

"The plan for diverting the course of the Tesino produced a singular and interesting scene. It was, as may well be believed, a work of uncommon labour. A new channel was to be scooped out and deepened; and, while the stream was turned into this bed, piles were to be sunk, and an immense mound of earth created, as an effectual impediment to the water's resuming its former course. This was a heavy burthen to the soldier; in addition to the disadvantage of being encamped during the course of a winter remarkably severe. By any other army the task would have been performed with cloudiness and discontent, if not complained of with repining and murmurs. But here the gaiety of the French character displayed itself. The nobility of France, who attended their sovereign in great numbers, accompanied the infantry in their labour. We laid aside

and in its consequences gave a new race not only of kings but of people to our island, is thus related by our celebrated historian.

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the indulgence of the marquee, of tapestry and carpets; we threw off our upper garments; and each of us seized a spade, a barrow of earth, or a mattock. We put our hands to the engines, and refused no effort under pretence that it was sordid or severe. While the trees were leafless, and nature appeared bound up in frost, sweat ran down our faces and bedewed our limbs. The army were encouraged by our example. An employment which under other circumstances would have been regarded as rigid, was thus made a source of new hilarity and amusement. It was a memorable sight to behold the venerable and grey-headed leaders of the French army, endeavouring to exert the strength and activity of their early years.

"I am now arrived at the period which put an end to the festivity and jocundness of the campaign. All after this was one continued series of disaster. About the close of January, our work, though not wholly interrupted, was considerably retarded, by a succession of heavy rains. This was injurious to us in many ways. Our project, which was executed in the midst of waters, rendered additional damp a matter of serious consideration. We were also seized with an apprehension of still greater magnitude, which was speedily realized. The snows being at length completely dissolved, and the quantity of water continually increasing, we perceived one afternoon strong symptoms that our mound, the

THE Norman fleet and army had been assembled, early in the summer in the year 1066,

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principal subject of our labour and source of our hope, was giving way in various places. The next morning at day-break, it rushed down every where at once with wonderful violence and noise. It is difficult to describe the sensation of anguish which was instantly and universally diffused. The labour of many weeks was overthrown in a moment. As we had proceeded in our work, we every day saw ourselves nearer the end to which we aspired. At this time our project was almost completed, and Pavia was in imagination already in our hands; an object which had cost us such unremitted exertions, the display of so much gallantry, and the loss of so many soldiers. We were confounded at the catastrophe. We gazed at each other, each in want of encouragement, and every one unable to afford it.

"Still, however, we were not destitute of advantages. The garrison began to be in want both of ammunition and provisions. They were in a general state of discontent, almost of mutiny, which scarcely all the address and authority of the governor were able to suppress. If the town continued longer unrelieved, it must inevitably fall into our hands. But even this our last hope was much diminished, by the intelligence we received the very day after the destruction of our mound, that the Imperial army, after having received large reinforcements, was approaching in considerable strength. The king had some time before, in the height of his confidence and elation of his heart, sent off a detachment of six thousand men to invade the kingdom of

at the mouth of the small river Dive, and all the troops had been instantly embarked; but

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Naples; for upon that, as well as on the Milanese, he inherited pretensions from his immediate predecessors.

"But notwithstanding the enemy were superior in numbers, and a part perhaps of their forces better disciplined than ours, they laboured under several disadvantages to which we were not exposed. The emperor, though his dominions were more extensive, did not derive from them a revenue equal to that of Francis. As he did not take the field in person, the war appeared to his subjects only a contest proceeding upon the ordinary motives of warfare. But my countrymen were led by their sovereign, were fresh from the recent insolence of an invasion of their own territory, and fought at once for personal glory and their country's honour. The king who commanded them, seemed expressly formed to obtain their attachment and affection. His nobles became enthusiastic by the example of his enthusiasm, and willingly disbursed their revenues to give prosperity and eclat to the campaign.

"The first question that arose upon the approach of the enemy, was whether we should break up the siege, and attend in some strong post the slow but sure effect of their want of money, and the consequent dispersion of their troops; or wait their attack in our present posture? The former advice was safe; but to the gallant spirit of Francis it appeared ignominious. He was upon all occasions inclined to rapid measures and decisive proceedings; and his temper, with the exception

the winds proved long contrary, and detained them in that harbour. The authority how-

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of a few wary and deliberate counsellors, accorded with that of our whole army. For some days we congratulated ourselves upon the wisdom of our choice; we presented to the enemy so formidable an appearance, that notwithstanding the cogent motives he had to proceed, he hesitated long before he ventured to attack us. At length however the day came that was pregnant with so momentous expectation.

"The sun rose bright in a cloudless sky. The cold of the season was such, as only to give new lightness and elasticity to the muscles and animal spirits. I saw few of those objects of nature, which in this delightful climate give so sacred a pleasure to the human soul. But in my present temper there was no view so ravishing, as the firm and equal steps of the martial bands, the impatience of the war horse, and the display of military standards; nor any music so enchanting, as the shrillness of the pipe, the clangor of the trumpet, the neighing of steeds, and the roaring of cannon.

"The Imperialists were at first unable to withstand the efforts of French valour. They gave way on every side; we pursued our advantage with impetuosity.—But the fortune of the day speedily changed. The cowardice and desertion of our Swiss allies, gave the first signal of adversity. The gallant commander of the garrison of Pavia, sallied out in the midst of the fight, and suddenly attacked us in the rear. A stratagem of the Imperial general effected the rout of our cavalry. The whole face of the field was utterly reversed.

ever of the duke, the good discipline maintained among the seamen and soldiers, and the

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"It would be in vain for me to attempt to describe even the small part that I beheld of the calamity and slaughter of the French army. At this distance of time, the recollection of it opens afresh the almost obliterated wounds of my heart. I saw my friends cut down, and perish on every side. Those who, together with myself, had marched out in the morning, swelled with exultation and hope, now lay weltering in their blood. Their hopes, their thoughts, their existence, were brought to a fatal termination. The soldiers were hewed and cut to pieces by hundreds, without note and without observation. Many of the first nobility of France, made desperate by the change of the battle, rushed into the thickest of the foe, and became voluntary sacrifices; choosing rather to perish, than to turn their backs with dishonour.

"The national character of France was altered by the battle of Pavia. It was in the fullest degree decisive of the fortune of the war. Milan, and every other place in the duchy, opened their gates to the conquerors; and, in a fortnight, not a Frenchman was left in the fields of Italy. Of the whole army only a small body effected an orderly retreat, under the command of the duke of Alençon. Many persons of the highest distinction perished in the battle: many were made prisoners by the enemy. France, by this event, found the list of her nobility considerably reduced in number; and those whose loss she sustained, were almost all taken from among the most distinguished and meritorious.

great care of supplying them with provisions, had prevented any disorder; when at last the

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" But what constituted the principal feature in this memorable event was, that the king himself was in the number of the prisoners; nor was he released by his ungenerous competitor till after more than a twelvemonth's confinement. During this period Francis tasted the dregs of adversity. Inclined at first to judge of his rival by himself, he expected a liberal treatment. In this he was deeply disappointed. After a detention of many months in the Milanese, the scene of his former successes, he was transferred to Madrid. He was personally neglected by the emperor, while his disloyal subject (the constable of Bourbon) was treated with singular distinction. The most rigorous terms were proposed to him. All this had the effect, in one instance, of sinking him into a disease of languor and dejection which he was not expected to survive; and, in an other, of inducing him to execute an instrument by which he abdicated the crown, and declared his resolution of remaining a prisoner for life. His confinement was at length terminated by solemnly engaging to compulsory articles, which he was determined to break as soon as he found himself at liberty; an alternative peculiarly grating to the magnanimity of his spirit. This reverse of fortune materially changed his character. The fine spirit of his ambition was from this time evaporated; and while he still retained the indefeasible qualities of his soul, and was gallant, kind-hearted, and generous, he bartered, as far as was compatible with his disposition, the enterprising and auda-

wind became favourable, and enabled them to sail along the coast till they reached St. Valori. There were, however, several vessels lost in this short passage; and as the winds again proved contrary, the army began to imagine that Heaven had declared against them, and that, notwithstanding the pope's benediction, they were destined to certain ruin. These bold warriors, who despised real dangers, were very subject to the dread of imaginary ones; and many of them began to mutiny, and some of them even to desert their colours, when the duke, in order to support their drooping hopes, ordered a procession to be made with the reliques of St. Valori, and prayers to be said for more favourable weather. The winds instantly changed; and as this incident happened on the eve of the feast of St. Michael, the tutelar saint of Normandy, the soldiers, fancying they saw the hand of Heaven in all these concurring

cious temper he had previously manifested, for the wary and phlegmatic system of his more fortunate competitor. His genius cowered before that of Charles; and the defeat of Pavia may perhaps be considered as having given a deadly wound to the reign of chivalry, and a secure foundation to that of craft, dissimulation, corruption and commerce."

circumstances, set out with the greatest alacrity. They met with no opposition on their voyage: a great fleet, which Harold had assembled, and which had cruised all summer off the Isle of Wight, had been dismissed, on his receiving the false intelligence, that William, discouraged by the contrary winds and other accidents, had laid aside his preparations. The Norman armament, proceeding in great order, arrived, without any material loss, at Pevensey, in Sussex; and the army quietly disembarked. The duke himself, as he leaped on shore, happened to stumble and fall; but had the presence of mind to turn the omen to his advantage, by calling aloud that he had taken possession of the country. And a soldier running to a neighbouring cottage, plucked some thatch, which, as if giving him seisin of the kingdom, he presented to his general. The joy and alacrity of William and his whole army was so great, that they were nowise discouraged, even when they heard of Harold's great victory over the Danes; and they seemed rather to wait with impatience for the arrival of the enemy.

This victory of Harold, though great and honourable, had proved in the main prejudicial to his interests, and may be regarded as the im-

mediate cause of his ruin. He lost many of his bravest officers and soldiers in the action; and he disgusted the rest, by refusing to distribute the Danish spoils among them:—a conduct which was little agreeable to his usual generosity of temper; but which his desire of sparing the people, in the war which impended over him from the duke of Normandy, had probably occasioned. He hastened by quick marches to reach this new invader; but though he was reinforced at London and other places with fresh troops, he found himself also weakened by the desertion of his old soldiers, who from fatigue and discontent secretly withdrew from their colours. His brother Gurth, a man of bravery and conduct, began to entertain apprehensions of the event; and remonstrated with the king, that it would be better policy to prolong the war, or at least, to spare his own person in the action. He urged to him, that the desperate situation of the duke of Normandy made it requisite for that prince to bring matters to a speedy decision, and put his whole fortune on the issue of a battle; but that the king of England, in his own country, beloved by his subjects, provided of every supply, had more infallible and less dangerous methods of ensuring to himself the victory: that the Nor-

man troops, elevated on the one hand with the highest hopes, and seeing on the other, no resource in case of a discomfiture, would fight to the last extremity; and being the flower of all the warriors of the continent, must be regarded as formidable to the English: that if their first fire and spirit, which is always most dangerous, were allowed to languish for want of action; if they were harassed with small skirmishes, straitened in provisions, and fatigued with the bad weather and deep roads during the winter season, which was approaching; they must fall an easy and a bloodless prey to their enemy: that if a general action was delayed, the English, sensible of the imminent danger to which their properties, as well as liberties, were exposed from these rapacious invaders, would hasten from all quarters to his assistance, and would render his army invincible: that at least, if he thought it necessary to hazard a battle, he ought not to expose his own person; but reserve, in case of disastrous accidents, some resource to the liberty and independence of the kingdom: and that having once been so unfortunate, as to be constrained to swear, and that upon the holy reliques, to support the pretensions of the duke of Normandy, it were better that another person

should command the army, who, not being bound by these sacred ties, might give the soldiers more certain hopes of a prosperous issue to the quarrel.

Harold was deaf to all these remonstrances; and being elated with his past prosperity, as well as stimulated by his native courage, he resolved to give battle in person; and for that purpose, he drew near to the Normans, who had removed their camp and fleet to Hastings, where they fixed their quarters. He was so confident of success, that he sent a message to the duke, promising him a sum of money, if he would depart the kingdom without effusion of blood: but his offer was rejected with disdain; and William, not to be behind with his enemy in vaunting, sent him a message by some monks, requiring him either to resign the kingdom, or to hold it of him in fealty, or to submit their cause to the arbitration of the pope, or to fight him in single combat. Harold replied, that the God of battles would soon be the arbiter of all their differences.

The English and Normans now prepared themselves for this important decision: but the aspect of things, on the night before the battle, was very different in the two camps. The English

spent the time in riot, and jollity, and disorder; the Normans in silence and in prayer, and in the functions of their religion. On the morning, the duke called together the most considerable of his chieftains, and made them a speech suitable to the occasion. He represented to them, that the event which they and he had long wished for was approaching; and the whole fortune of the war now depended on their sword, and would be decided in a single action: that never army had greater motives for exerting a vigorous courage, whether they considered the prize which would attend their victory, or the inevitable destruction which must ensue upon their discomfiture: that if their martial and veteran bands could once break those raw soldiers, who had rashly dared to approach them, they conquered a kingdom at one blow, and were justly intitled to all its possessions as the reward of their prosperous valour: that, on the contrary, if they remitted in the least their wonted prowess, an enraged enemy hung upon their rear, the sea met them in their retreat, and an ignominious death was the certain punishment of their imprudent cowardice: that by collecting so numerous and brave a host, he had ensured every human means of conquest; and the commander of the enemy, by his cri-

minal conduct, had given him just cause to hope for the favour of Heaven, in whose hands alone lay the event of wars and battles: and that a perjured usurper, anathemized by the sovereign pontiff, and conscious of his own breach of faith, would be struck with terror on their appearance, and would prognosticate to himself the fate which his multiplied crimes had so justly merited. The duke next divided his army into three lines: the first, headed by Montgomery, consisted of archers and light-armed infantry: the second, commanded by Martel, was composed of his bravest battalions, heavy-armed, and ranged in close order: his cavalry, at whose head he placed himself, formed the third line; and were so disposed, that they stretched beyond the infantry, and flanked each wing of the army. He ordered the signal of battle to sound; and the whole army moving at once, and singing the hymn or song of Roland, the famous peer of Charlemagne, advanced, in order and with alacrity, towards the enemy.

Harold had seized the advantage of a rising ground; and having besides drawn some trenches to secure his flanks, he resolved to stand upon the defensive, and to avoid all action with the cavalry, in which he was inferior. The Kentish

men were placed in the van; a post which they had always claimed as their due: the Londoners guarded the standard: and the king himself, accompanied by his two valiant brothers Gurth and Leofwin, dismounting from horseback, placed himself at the head of his infantry, and expressed his resolution to conquer or to perish in the action. The first attack of the Normans was desperate, but was received with equal valour by the English; and after a furious combat, which remained long undecided, the former overcome by the difficulty of the ground, and hard pressed by the enemy, began first to relax their vigour, then to give ground; and confusion was spreading among the ranks; when William, who found himself on the brink of destruction, hastened, with a select band, to the relief of his dismayed forces. His presence restored the action; the English were obliged to retreat with loss; and the duke, ordering his second line to advance, renewed the attack with fresh forces and with redoubled courage. Finding that the enemy, aided by the advantage of ground, and animated by the example of their prince, still made a vigorous resistance, he tried a stratagem, which was very delicate in its management, but which seemed adviseable in his desperate situation, when, if he gained not a

decisive victory, he was totally undone. He ordered his troops to make a hasty retreat, and to allure the enemy from their ground by the appearance of flight. The artifice succeeded against these unexperienced troops; who, heated by the action, and sanguine in their hopes, precipitantly followed the Normans into the plain. William gave orders, that at once the infantry should face about upon their pursuers, and the cavalry make an assault upon their wings, and both of them pursue the advantage, which the surprise and terror of the enemy must give them in that critical and decisive moment. The English were repulsed with great slaughter, and drove back to the hill; where, being rallied again by the bravery of Harold, they were able, notwithstanding their loss, to maintain the post and continue the combat. The duke tried the same stratagem a second time with the same success; but even after this double advantage, he still found a great body of English, who, maintaining themselves in firm array, seemed determined to dispute the victory to the last extremity. He ordered his heavy-armed infantry to make the assault upon them; while his archers, placed behind, should gall the enemy, who were exposed by the situation of the ground, and who were

intent in defending themselves against the swords and spears of the assailants. By this disposition, he at last prevailed. Harold was slain by an arrow, while he was combating with great bravery at the head of his men: his two brothers shared the same fate; and the English, discouraged by the fall of these princes, gave ground on all sides, and were pursued with great slaughter by the victorious Normans. A few troops, however, of the vanquished dared still to turn upon their pursuers; and taking them in deep and miry ground, obtained some revenge for the slaughter and dishonour of the day. But the appearance of the duke obliged them to seek their safety by flight, and darkness saved them from any farther pursuit by the enemy.

Thus was gained by William duke of Normandy, the great and decisive victory of Hastings, after a battle which was fought from morning till sunset, and which seemed worthy, by the heroic feats of valour displayed by both armies and by both commanders, to decide the fate of a mighty kingdom. William had three horses killed under him: and there fell near fifteen thousand men on the side of the Normans: the loss was still more considerable on that of the vanquished; besides the death of the king

and his two brothers. The dead body of Harold was brought to William, and was generously restored without ransom to his mother. The Norman army left not the field of battle without giving thanks to Heaven, in the most solemn manner, for their victory: and the duke having refreshed his forces, prepared to push to the utmost his advantage against the divided, dismayed, and discomfited English.

THE following is an account of the three great battles of CRESSY, POICTIERS, and AGINCOURT:—In the summer of the year 1346, Edward III. invaded France at the head of an army, consisting of four thousand men at arms, ten thousand archers, ten thousand Welsh infantry, and six thousand Irish. These last bodies were light disorderly troops, fitter for doing execution in a pursuit, or scouring the country, than for any regular action. The bow was always esteemed a frivolous weapon, where true military discipline was known, and regular bodies of well-armed foot were maintained. The only solid force in Edward's army were the men at arms: and even these, being all cavalry, were much inferior in action to good infantry: and as the whole whole were new-levied troops, it gives, as

Hume observes, "but a very mean idea of the military force of those ages; which, being ignorant of every other art, had not properly cultivated the art of war itself, the sole object of general attention."

After making himself master of the principal places in Lower Normandy, Edward turned his arms to cross the Seine to its northern bank, and so proceed to Picardy and Flanders. Having surmounted various difficulties on his march, he at last arrived on the river Somme, which flows by Amiens and Abbeville to the English Channel; but there he found the bridges either broken down or strongly guarded. A body of French troops were stationed on the opposite side of the river; and he was informed that the king of France, Philip de Valois, was advancing against him, from the other quarter, with an army of a hundred thousand men. In such an extremity, Edward found a peasant; who betraying the cause of his country, from the influence of a great reward, informed him of a ford in the Somme, below Abbeville, which might be passed in safety when the tide was out. Thither Edward hastened: and although bodies of French troops were posted on the opposite side, he lost not a moment; but throwing himself into the

river, sword in hand, at the head of his troops, he drove the French from their position, and pursued them to some distance on the plain. The French under Philip arrived at the ford, when the rear of the English were still engaged in the water;—so narrow was the escape which Edward, by his prudence and celerity, made from this imminent danger! The rising of the tide in the Somme, prevented Philip from following him; obliging him to return to the bridge of Abbeville, by which much time was lost.

When Edward had proceeded a short way in the plain of Picardy, he perceived the very critical situation in which he stood, in the midst of an enemy's country so powerful and so enterprising as the French: he therefore resolved to take post on some advantageous ground. This he did, near the village of Cressy (or more correctly, Crecy); and arranged his men in excellent order, determined there to await the arrival of the enemy, and hoping that their eagerness to engage and to prevent his retreat, would draw them on to some rash and ill-concerted action. Edward's army was divided into three lines, and formed on a gentle ascent. The first line was commanded by his eldest son, Edward, prince of Wales, commonly called the

Black Prince (from the colour of his armour); the second, by some distinguished English warriors; and the third, by Edward himself, in person*. By this disposition he was ready either to support the two first lines or to secure a retreat, in case of any misfortune. He also drew trenches on his flanks, to defend himself against the attacks of the French, who were so superior in numbers; and his baggage was placed in his rear, in a wood covered by an intrenchment. This masterly arrangement of his forces served to compose their minds; and Edward rode through their ranks with such an air of cheerfulness as to fill the men with entire confidence. He represented to them the necessity to which they were reduced; and the certain destruction that awaited them, if shut up as they were, in the midst of their foes, they trusted to any thing but their own valour. He reminded them of the successes they had hitherto obtained; and pointed out the advantages they had, by their order of battle, over the immense multitudes opposed to them.

It is said that Edward in this famous battle employed a new invention against the French,

* August 26th, 1346.

placing in his front some pieces of artillery, the first that had been used on any remarkable occasion in Europe. The use of artillery was at this time known in France as well as in England; but Philip had, perhaps in his haste, left his cannon behind him. All his other movements discovered the same imprudence and precipitation. He had marched rapidly from Abbeville; but, before he reached the English army, he learned from his scout, that they were drawn up in great order, and waiting to receive him. Philip commanded his troops to halt, in order to recover somewhat from their fatigue: but their former precipitancy, and the impatience of the French nobility, put it out of his power to restore his army to regular order; so that they arrived in presence of the English, already fatigued and disordered, and very imperfectly formed into three lines. The first line consisted of Italians, commanded by a noble Genoese; the second was under the king's brother, the count of Alençon; and Philip himself was posted in the third. Besides the French monarch, there were no less than three other crowned heads in the engagement: the king of Bohemia; the king of the Romans, his son; and the king of Majorca: together with all the nobility and

great vassals of France. Philip's army was now increased to above one hundred and twenty thousand men, while Edward had not one-third of that number.

The English, on the approach of the enemy, kept their ranks firm and immoveable. There had happened, a little before the action began, a thunder-shower, which had moistened the strings of the Genoese cross-bows: their arrows therefore, fell short of the English; but these latter taking their bows out of their cases, poured such a shower of arrows on the Italians in the first line, as to throw them into disorder, and drive them back on the second line under Alençon, who, enraged at their cowardice, ordered his men to put them to the sword. The English artillery then fired amidst this crowd, while their archers discharged their arrows among them, and nothing was to be seen in that vast body of men but confusion and dismay.

The young prince of Wales, observing this disorder, led on his line; but the French cavalry, delivered from the Genoese, who fled in all directions, advanced and began to enclose him round. The second line of the English then moved on to support the prince in the first; when the battle becoming very dangerous, the

earl of Warwick sent to entreat succours from Edward himself, who had chosen his station on a rising ground, whence he surveyed the whole action. His answer was, that he was confident the prince would show himself worthy to be his son, and that he reserved for him the whole honours of the day.

When this was reported to the troops engaged, it filled them with such ardour, that they made an attack with redoubled valour on the French. The count of Alençon was slain: the whole line of cavalry was thrown into confusion; the riders were killed or dismounted; and no quarter was that day granted by the victors.

The king of France advancing to support his brother, found him already dead, and his line in disorder. The confusion now became extreme: Philip, having lost one horse, was again mounted, and still determined to maintain the struggle; when one of his attendants, seizing the reins of his horse, hurried the king off the field. The French army then took to flight; and was followed and put to the sword, without mercy, by the English, until the approach of night put an end to the pursuit.

This celebrated battle lasted from three in the afternoon till night. The next morning was

foggy; and, as the English observed many of the French wandering in disorder, they employed a stratagem to draw them into their hands. They erected on the high grounds, some French standards taken in the action; and all who were allured by these false signals were put to the sword. In excuse for this inhumanity it was alleged, that the king of France had given similar orders to his troops; but the real reason, says Hume, was, that the English, in their present situation, did not choose to be encumbered with prisoners. In the battle and on the following day, there fell, according to a moderate computation, twelve hundred French knights, fourteen hundred gentlemen, four thousand men at arms, besides about thirty thousand of inferior rank. Many of the principal nobles of France remained on the field, and the kings of Bohemia and Majorca were among the slain.—The fate of the king of Bohemia was remarkable: he was blind, from age: but being resolved to hazard his person, and to set an example to others, he ordered the reins of his horse to be tied, on each side, to the horses of two of his attendants; and their three dead bodies were afterwards found among the slain, with their horses standing by them in that si-

tuation. On his helmet was a crest of three ostrich feathers; and his motto was the German words ICH DIEN (*I serve*), which the prince of Wales adopted, and which have been worn by his successors down to this day, as a memorial of the signal victory of Cressy.

This action seems not less remarkable for the small loss sustained by the English, than for the great slaughter of the French. The English are said to have lost only one esquire and three knights, with very few of inferior rank: which statement, if correct, proves that the disposition adopted by Edward, and the rash disorderly attack by the French, had rendered the whole affair rather a rout than a battle—which was, indeed, the common case with engagements in those times.

THE battle of POICTIERS happened in the following manner:—

IN 1356, about ten years after the battle of Cressy, when Philip king of France was dead, and his son John had succeeded to the throne; fresh disputes existing between England and France, the Black Prince, at the head of an army which is by no historian estimated at more than twelve thousand men, and of which not

one-third part were English, penetrated into the western provinces of France. At last, finding that king John had assembled an army of above sixty thousand men to oppose his progress, the prince resolved to return to Guienne, which then belonged to England. Their forces came within sight of each other at Maupertuis, near Poictiers; and young Edward prepared for battle with equal courage and prudence. All, however, would have been insufficient to save him, had John known how to make use of his advantages; for the great superiority in numbers, of the French, enabled him to surround the English, and so to reduce them to surrender at discretion. But such was the impatience and ardour of the French nobility, and so much had they been bent solely on coming up with the English, that they seem to have had no other object in contemplation.

When the French were ready to begin the assault, the cardinal of Perigord appeared in their camp, and endeavoured to prevent the effusion of blood. Although his good offices were ineffectual in that point, the delay of one day, which was thus occasioned, was of the utmost service to Edward; as in that time he strengthened, by fresh works, the post he had

so judiciously chosen. He also arranged an ambush of three hundred of his best troops; whom he ordered to make a long circuit, that they might fall on the flank or rear of the French during the engagement.

The Black Prince took the command of his main body himself; committing his van to the earl of Warwick, and his rear to the earls of Salisbury and Suffolk. His other most experienced officers were posted in different parts of the army.

John had also drawn up his forces in three divisions: the first being commanded by his brother the duke of Orleans; the second by the dauphin, attended by his two younger brothers; the third by the king in person, having by his side Philip, his fourth son, and favourite, then about fourteen years of age.

The English were so posted, that there was no way of reaching them but through a narrow lane, bordered on each side with hedges. To open this passage John sent on a body of men at arms: but these on their way in the lane, were attacked by the English archers,—who lined the hedges on each side, and did great execution on them without being themselves in the least exposed. This French detachment, however,

although much diminished, pushed on: but on arriving at the end of the lane, they met the prince of Wales with a body of chosen troops ready to receive them; on which, the French endeavoured to retreat, and those who escaped back through the lane fell upon their own army, and threw every thing into disorder. Just in that critical moment, the English troops who had been in ambuscade, suddenly appearing, attacked the dauphin's line. On this, the governors of that young prince and his brothers, too anxious for their charge or for their own safety, hurried them off the field; and set the example of flight, which was soon followed by that of the whole division.

The duke of Orleans, imagining that all was lost, carried off his division also by a retreat, which soon turned to a flight. But the body commanded by king John himself still kept its ground. It was somewhat dismayed by the sudden retreat of the other divisions; but as it was alone more numerous than the whole English army, John made the most strenuous efforts to retrieve the day; and indeed the only resistance exerted in the battle was by his line.

The prince of Wales falling on some German horse posted in John's front, a hot engagement

ensued—the one party being encouraged by the hope of a speedy victory, and the other stimulated by the shame of yielding to an enemy so much inferior. At last the Germans gave way, and the king himself remained exposed to the fury of the English. Numbers of his nobles fell around him: even his young son was wounded, while fighting valiantly in defence of his father. John himself, overcome with fatigue and vexation, might easily have been slain; but the English were too anxious to make him their prisoner, to think of injuring his person. Many who attempted to seize him suffered for their temerity: and he still cried out, "Where is my cousin the prince of Wales?" seeming to be determined to yield to no person of inferior rank. But being told that the prince was at a distance on the field, the unfortunate John surrendered to a gentleman of Picardy, who, for murder, had been obliged to leave his country, and was now engaged in the English army. John was then conducted to the prince, who received him with the greatest respect and distinction.

The battle of Poictiers was fought on the 19th of September, 1356. John and his young son were carried by Edward to London, in the next spring; where that unhappy monarch remained a

prisoner, but always treated with the highest generosity and respect, until July 1360, when he returned to France*.

The last of these three great battles was that of Azincour, or (as it is commonly written) Agincourt.

The successes which the English have in different ages obtained over the French, have been much owing to the situation of England. From its insular position, the former nation could take advantage of every misfortune which

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* John went to France merely on his parole; it being conceived that his presence there might be serviceable in arranging the terms of a treaty of peace; but the regency and states of that country refusing to agree to the conditions insisted on by the English, he voluntarily returned to England, in opposition to the suggestions and advice of his council. It was on this occasion that he uttered that noble sentiment: that "if honour were expelled from the rest of the world, it ought still to find a place in the breasts of kings." He died in the year 1364, at his residence of the Savoy in the Strand; which was then a palace belonging to John of Gaunt.

This might be no unuseful lesson to the enemy who at the present moment threatens us with invasion and subjugation:—that an English king (Henry VI.) has been solemnly crowned king of France at Paris; and a French king died a prisoner in England.

attended the latter, and was little exposed to the danger of reprisals. The English never left their country but when they were conducted by a king of extraordinary genius, or when they found their neighbours divided by intestine factions, or when supported by a powerful alliance on the continent: and, as all these circumstances concurred in the time of the renowned Henry V., he resolved to take advantage of them.

In the summer of 1415, Henry, imitating the conduct of Edward III., carried over to Normandy an army of six thousand men at arms, and twenty-four thousand foot, mostly archers. His first enterprise was the siege of Harfleur, at the mouth of the Seine; which town, after a gallant defence, at last fell into his hands. His army however, had suffered so much from the fatigues of the siege and the unusual heat of the weather, that Henry could enter on no other undertaking; and was obliged, after all his mighty preparations, to think of returning to England.

He had dismissed his ships from Harfleur; so that he was under a necessity of marching by land to Calais, before he could reach a place of safety. A numerous French army, of fourteen thousand men at arms and forty thousand foot, was already assembled in Normandy, to oppose

his retreat. Henry, therefore, offered to restore Harfleur to the French, if they would grant him a safe passage to Calais; but the proposal being rejected, he resolved to make his way, by valour and conduct, through all opposition.

That he might not discourage his small army by the appearance of a flight, nor expose them to the hazards attending precipitate marches, he made slow and deliberate journeys, till he reached the river Somme; which he prepared to pass at the place where Edward had, in a like situation, escaped from Philip de Valois. But he found the ford rendered impassable by the precautions of the French general, and guarded by a strong body on the opposite bank; so that he was obliged to march higher up the river, in search of a passage. Henry was continually harassed on his march by flying parties of French; he saw bodies on the other side of the river, ready to oppose his crossing: his provisions were cut off; his troops were worn out with fatigue and sickness; and his affairs seemed now in a desperate situation. He, however, at last met with a passage over the river, near the town of St. Quintin, which, not being sufficiently guarded, he surprised, and carried over his army in safety.

He then bent his course towards Calais; but

was constantly exposed to danger from the French army, which had also passed the Somme, and, getting before him, endeavoured to intercept his retreat. After advancing some time, Henry from a height discovered the whole French troops drawn up the plain of Agincourt, and so posted that it was impossible for him to proceed without coming to an engagement.

Nothing in appearance could be more unequal than the battle on which his safety and his fortunes depended. His army was reduced to nearly half the number which had disembarked at Harfleur; and even these laboured under every discouragement and want. The enemy were four times more numerous, plentifully supplied with provisions of every kind, and commanded by the dauphin and the other princes of the blood royal of France. The situation of Henry being exactly similar to that of Edward at Cressy, and to that of the Black Prince at Poictiers, the memory of those great battles inspired the English with courage, and made them hope for a like deliverance from their difficulties. The king likewise observed the same prudent conduct which had been adopted by those great commanders. He drew up his army on a narrow space of ground, having woods on each hand,

which defended his flanks; and in that position waited for the attack of the French.

Had the French commanders been able either to reason justly on the present circumstances of both armies, or to profit by experience, they would have declined an engagement; and waited till necessity, obliging the English to advance, had made them relinquish the advantages of their situation. But the impetuous valour of the French nobility, and their vain confidence in superior numbers, brought on an action, which proved the source of infinite calamity to their country.

The French archers on horseback, and their men at arms, advanced upon the English archers, who had fixed palisades before their front to break the enemy's attack; and who safely, from behind that defence, assailed them with such showers of arrows as nothing could resist. The clay soil moistened by rain, proved another obstacle to the assaults of the French cavalry: the wounded men and horses deranged their ranks; the narrow ground on which they acted prevented them from recovering their proper order, and their whole army soon became a scene of confusion and terror. Henry, then perceiving his advantage, ordered his archers, who were light and unencumbered, to advance upon the

enemy, and secure the victory. They fell with their battle-axes upon the French, who in their present posture could neither defend themselves nor quit the field; so that multitudes were cut to pieces without resistance. The English archers were supported by the men at arms; who pushed on and made dreadful havoc among the enemy.

When all opposition seemed to be at an end, the English began to make prisoners: and having advanced across the field of action, into the open plain, they discovered the rear of the French army still formed in order of battle. At the same time they were alarmed by a noise and alarm from behind; proceeding from a body of peasants who, headed by some officers of Picardy, had attacked their baggage, and were doing execution on the unarmed followers of their camp. Henry seeing the enemy on all sides of him, began to entertain apprehensions from his prisoners, and therefore thought it necessary to issue orders for putting them to death; but when he discovered the true cause of the alarm, he stopped the slaughter in time to save a great number of lives.

No battle was ever more fatal to France, by the number of princes and nobles slain or taken

prisoners. The killed are computed, on the whole, to have amounted to ten thousand men: and, as the slaughter fell chiefly on the cavalry, it is said that of these eight thousand were gentlemen. The prisoners in Henry's hands were fourteen thousand. All the English that were slain, it is said, did not exceed forty; though some writers, with much greater probability, make the number more considerable.

An account of the battle of the 21st of March, 1801, I shall extract from a late interesting and respectable publication.

The English army, under the command of sir Ralph Abercromby, occupied a line about a mile in extent, nearly four miles from Alexandria; having a sandy plain in their front, the sea on their right, and the lake of Aboukir and the canal of Alexandria (at that time dry) on their left. Their flank was covered by gun-boats, and redoubts filled with artillery. Here general Menou resolved to attack them on the ensuing morning. He proclaimed a Louis-d'or for each man who would volunteer to commence the action, by turning the right of his enemy. This was undertaken by the Invincibles, amounting to nine hun-

dred men. Through the vigilance of the emissaries of sir Sydney Smith, general Abercromby was apprised of the design on the same evening.

The action commenced with a sham attack on the left of the English, about two hours before day-light, on the 21st of March; and was immediately succeeded by one real and vigorous on the right, where the French, mounted on dromedaries, were twice repulsed with great slaughter. At this time general Abercromby took horse, and rode towards the scene of action. After a dreadful struggle, in which Lanusse and many of the Invincibles were slain, and to which they were stimulated by liquor, they succeeded in turning the right of the English. Eager to second the efforts of Lanusse, Rampon boldly charged the reserve, consisting of the Forty-second, together with a corps of Germans and others, under the command of general Stewart; and the Twenty-eighth, under the command of major-general Moore, the senior officer (and, consequently, chief in command) of the reserve, which had moved to the support of the right.

The left wing of the Forty-second regiment, under the command of major Stirling, was ordered to advance to the support of the left of the

Twenty-eighth. This having been effected, captain Bisset, of the light company, was directed to keep a good look-out on the left. In the rear were heard some persons speaking French in a low tone. These were, at first, mistaken for some of general Stewart's foreign brigade, supposed to be coming up to the aid of the Forty-second regiment; but on approaching closer, they were discovered to be a French battalion marching up in open column to the rear of the corps, with one field-piece and six horses. To avoid being placed between two fires, the left wing charged instantly, threw the French battalion into confusion, and made great slaughter.

In this onset their gun and horses were captured. The enemy were pressed so hard, that the remains of this battalion sought shelter in an old ruin, having been prevented from getting farther to the rear by the right wing of the Forty-second then coming up to the assistance of the left. To major Stirling, who, at this time, entered the ruin, close upon the heels of the flying enemy, two French officers presented themselves, and begged their lives. This having been granted, the remainder were ordered to lay down their arms; and major Stirling advancing to the

officer who carried the standard, and seizing it from him, they instantly complied.

The right wing having been now formed, both that and the left regained the ground they had previously occupied. There they were met by two strong columns of the enemy advancing, on whom they commenced a very sharp fire. Colonel Stewart ordered an immediate charge, by which the enemy were driven back two hundred yards. This was an important period of the action; for a body of French cavalry were then observed ready to attack the Forty-second in rear. Colonel Stewart, therefore, gave instant orders to halt. Thus, after considerable fatigue, and their ammunition being nearly expended, the Forty-second saw itself nearly surrounded, and fresh detachments of the enemy advancing: but, as danger increased, the royal highlanders were stimulated to additional exertion. A fortunate circumstance at this moment occurred. General Stewart's Foreign regiment, who had not hitherto borne a great share in the action, arrived, fully provided with ammunition. By three well-directed volleys, they forced a part of the French infantry to retire into a hollow in the rear.

The Forty-second, on being at this time obliged to retire through the foreign corps in files, were unavoidably broken. Observing their situation, the French cavalry impetuously charged them on the left; and, in this charge, the brave sir Ralph Abercromby received his mortal wound.

Six hundred and fifty of the Invincibles, thirty-seven of whom had perished in defending their colours, lay extended on the ground, when the remainder entreated and obtained quarter. The main body of the French, in a heavy column, pressed at this moment through the English line, towards the rear of the camp; accompanied by the cavalry, under general Roize, who directed a furious charge on the rear of the reserve. This was, however, broken by the excavated pit-holes, about three feet deep, which had been raised with the sand another foot or two, as conveniences for the English soldiers, before the landing of the tents. In this ground the French were completely routed. So many of their generals had now fallen, that the soldiers were long engaged without orders; till Menou, after two hours deliberation, ordered a retreat; which they executed, under cover of the opposite hills, lined with cannon. Perceiving the advantages of the French position, and being deficient of cavalry,

the English were contented to harass their retreat; and at eleven o'clock they re-occupied the heights of Nicopolis.

By constantly removing their killed, during the action, the enemy concealed the extent of their loss, which was supposed to amount to three or four thousand.

The English too suffered greatly: but most in the death of their beloved commander, sir Ralph Abercromby; who died of a wound he had received in this conflict, on board the Foudroyant, March 28. Their loss, in killed, wounded, and thirty-two missing, amounted to twelve hundred and twenty-five. The number of our troops brought into the field, did not much exceed eleven thousand; which was nearly the same with that of the French.

LETTER XXXIV.

QUALIFICATIONS OF A GENERAL.

MY DEAR SON,

IT now only remains for me, in this last Letter which I shall address to you in the prosecution of my plan, to exhibit to you at one view the qualifications and character of a general.

THE former are thus delineated by marshal Saxe, who himself afforded a perfect model of the accomplishments which he recommended.

"THE most indispensable requisite to a general," says he, "is valour; without which all the rest will prove nugatory. The next is a sound understanding, with some genius: for he must be not only courageous, but fertile in expedients. The third is health, and a robust constitution. His mind must be capable of prompt and vigorous resources: he must have a talent and aptitude at discovering the designs of others, without betraying the slightest trace of his own. He must be seemingly communicative, in order to encou-

rage others to unbosom, but remain tenaciously reserved in matters that concern his own army; he must, in a word, possess activity with judgment, be able to make a proper choice of his officers, and never deviate from the strictest line of military justice. Old soldiers must not be rendered wretched and unhappy, by unwarrantable promotions, nor must extraordinary talents be kept back, to the detriment of the service, on account merely of established regulations. Great abilities will justify exceptions; but ignorance and inactivity will not be compensated for, by years spent in the profession.

"In his deportment he must be affable, and always superior to peevishness or ill humour; he must not know, or at least not seem to know what a spirit of resentment is: when he is under the necessity of inflicting military chastisement, he must see the guilty punished without being influenced by a foolish humanity; and if the delinquent be among the number of his most intimate friends, he must be doubly severe towards the unfortunate man. For it is better, in instances of correction, that one individual should be treated with rigour by order of the person over whom he may be supposed to hold some influence, than that an idea should go forth in

the army, of public justice being sacrificed to private sentiments.

"A MODERN general should always have before him the example of Manlius*: he must divest himself of personal sensations; and not only be convinced himself, but convince others, that he is the organ of military justice, and that what he does is absolutely necessary. With these qualifications, and by this line of conduct, he will secure the affections of his followers, and instil into their minds all the impulses of deference and respect; he will be feared, and consequently obeyed.

"The resources of a general's mind are as various, as the occasion for the exercise of them are multiplied and chequered. He must be perfectly master of the art of knowing how to support an army in all circumstances and situations: how to apply its strength, or be sparing of its energy and confidence; how to post all its different component parts, so as not to be forced to give or receive battle in opposition to his own plans. When once engaged, he must have presence of mind to grasp all the relative points of

* This example has been inserted in the note in this Volume, page 90.

disposition and arrangement, to seize favourable moments for impression, and to be thoroughly conversant in the infinite vicissitudes that occur during the heat of a battle: on a ready possession of which its ultimate success depends.—These requisites are indeed manifold; but they grow out of the diversity of situations, and the combinations of events, that produce their necessity. A general, to be perfectly master of them, must on the day of battle be divested of every thought, and be inaccessible to every feeling, but what immediately regards the business of the day: he must reconnoitre with the promptitude of a skilful geographer, whose eye collects instantaneously all the relative portions of locality, and feels his ground as it were by instinct; and in the disposition of his troops, he must discover a thorough knowledge of his profession, and make all his arrangements with accuracy and dispatch. His order of battle must be simple and unconfused: and the execution of his plan be as quick as if it merely consisted in uttering some few of the simplest words of command.

"The general officers who act under such a commander, must be ignorant of their business indeed, if, upon receipt of such orders, they should be deficient in the immediate means of

answering them by a prompt and ready co-operation. So that he has only to issue directions according to the circumstances as they arise, and to rest satisfied that every division will act in conformity to his intentions; but if, on the contrary, he should so far forget his situation as to act the part of a drill-serjeant in the heat of action, he must find himself in the case of the fly in the fable, which perched upon a wheel, and foolishly imagined that the motion of the carriage was influenced by its own position. A general, therefore, ought on the day of battle to be entirely master of himself, and to have both his mind and his eye rivetted to the immediate scene of action. He will by these means be enabled to see every thing: his judgment will be unembarrassed; and he will at once discover the vulnerable points of the enemy. The instant a favourable opening offers, by which the contest may be decided, it then (and not till then) becomes his duty to head the nearest body of troops, and without any regard to personal safety, to advance against the enemy's line. It is, however, impossible to lay down rules, or to specify with accuracy all the different ways, by which a victory may be obtained. Every thing depends upon variety of situations, casualty of events, and in-

immediate occurrences, which no human foresight can positively ascertain; but which, when they do appear, may be converted to good purposes by a quick eye, a ready conception, and a prompt execution. Prince Eugene was singularly gifted with these qualifications; particularly with that self-possession which constitutes the essence of a military character.

"MANY commanders have been so limited in their ideas of warfare, that when events have brought the contest to issue, and two rival armies have been drawn out for action, their whole attention has devolved upon a straight alignment, an equality of step, or a regular distance in the intervals of columns. They have considered it sufficient to give answers to questions proposed by their aides-de-camp, to send orders in various directions, and to gallop themselves from one quarter to another, without steadily adhering to the fluctuations of the day, or calmly watching for an opportunity to strike a decisive blow. They endeavour, in fact, to do every thing; and thus they do nothing. They appear like men whose presence of mind deserts them the instant they are taken out of the beaten track, or are required to supply unexpected calls by uncommon exertions.—And whence do these contradictions

arise? From an ignorance of those high qualifications, without which the mere routine of duty, methodical arrangement, and studied discipline, must fall to the ground, and defeat themselves. Many officers spend their whole lives in putting a few regiments through a regular set of manœuvres; and having done so, they vainly imagine that all the science of a military man consists in that acquirement. When, in process of time, the command of a large army falls to their duty, they are lost in the magnitude of the undertaking; and from not knowing how to act as they ought, they remain satisfied with doing what they have partially learned.

"MILITARY knowledge, as far as it regards a general, or commander in chief, may be divided into two parts: one comprehending mere discipline, and settled systems for putting a certain number of rules into practice; and the other originating in a sublimity of conception, which method may assist, but cannot give.

"IF a man is not born with faculties that are naturally adapted to the situation of a general, and if his talents do not fit the extraordinary casualties of war, he will never rise beyond mediocrity. It is, in fact, in war as it is in painting, or in music. Perfection in either

art grows out of innate talents, and can never be acquired without them. Study and perseverance may correct ideas: but no application, no assiduity, will give the life and energy of action,—these are the work of nature.

"It has been my fate," observes the Marshal, "to see several very excellent colonels become indifferent generals. I have known others, who have distinguished themselves at sieges, and in the different evolutions of an army, lose their presence of mind and appear ignorant of their profession, the instant they were taken from that particular line; and become incapable of commanding a few squadrons of horse. Should a man of this cast be put at the head of an army, he will confine himself to mere dispositions and manœuvres: to them he will look for safety; and if once thwarted, his defeat will be inevitable, because his mind is not capable of other resources.

"In order to obviate in the best possible manner, the innumerable disasters which must arise from the uncertainty of war, and the greater uncertainty of the means that are adopted to carry it on, some general rules ought to be laid down, not only for the government of the troops, but for the instruction of those

who have the command of them. Some such principles are these; that when the line of the columns advance, the distances should be scrupulously observed; that whenever a body of troops is ordered to charge, every part of the line should rush forward with intrepidity and vigour; that if openings are made in the first line, it becomes the duty of the second instantly to fill up the chasms*.

"These instructions issue from the plain dictates of nature, and do not require the least elucidation. They constitute the A B C of soldiers. Nothing can be more simple, or more intelligible to every one concerned in their execution: so much so, that it would be ridiculous in a general to sacrifice essential objects in order to attend to such minutiæ. His functions in the day of battle are confined to those occupations of the mind, by which he is enabled to watch the countenance of the enemy, to observe his movements, and to see with an eagle's or a Frederic's eye, all the relative directions that his opponents take. It must be his busi-

* This idea of the Marshal's has been admirably developed and fulfilled in Part IV. of our tactical Regulations, published by authority; under the division The Line.

ness to create alarms and suspicions among the enemy's line in one quarter while his real intention is to act against another; to perplex and disconcert him in his plans; to take advantage of the openings which his feints may have produced; and when the contest is brought to issue, to be capable of rushing, with effect, upon the weakest part, and of carrying the sword of death where its blow is certain of being mortal. But to accomplish these important and indispensable points, his judgment must be clear, his mind collected, his heart firm, and his eyes incapable of being diverted even for a moment, by the trifling occurrences of the day.

"I AM not, however, an advocate for pitched battles; especially at the commencement of a war. A skilful general might, I am persuaded, carry on a contest between two rival nations during the whole of his life, without being once obliged to come to a decisive action. Nothing harasses and eventually distresses an enemy so much as this species of warfare. He ought to be broken and unnerved by a series of frequent attacks.

"IT must not be inferred from this opinion, that when an opportunity presents itself by which an enemy may be crushed at once, the

attack should not be made, or that advantage should not be taken of the errors he may commit: all I mean to prove is, that war can be carried on without leaving any thing to chance; and in this consist the perfection and highest point of ability belonging to a general. But when a battle is risked, the triumphant party ought well to know all the advantages which may be derived from his victory. A wise general, indeed, will not remain satisfied with having made himself master of the mere field of battle. This, I am sorry to observe, is too often the custom; and, strange to say, the custom is not without its advocates.

"It is too much the maxim of some generals, to facilitate the retreat of an enemy. Nothing can be more impolitic, or more absurd. An able surgeon might as well tamper with a mortification; and endeavour to save an useless limb, at the hazard of destroying all the vital parts.— An enemy, on the contrary, ought to be vigorously pushed, harassed night and day, and pursued through every winding he can make. By a conduct of this sort, the advancing army will drive him from all his holds and fastnesses; and his retreat will ultimately turn out a complete overthrow. Ten thousand well trained

and disciplined troops, that are sent forward from the main army, to hang upon the rear of a retiring enemy, will be able to destroy an army of an hundred thousand men, when that army has been once forced to make retrograde movements. A want of confidence in their generals, added to many other disheartening circumstances, will naturally possess the minds of the latter, while implicit confidence and warm affection must influence the former. A first defeat, well followed up, almost always terminates in a total route, and finishes the contest. But some generals do not wish to bring war to a speedy issue: public misfortunes frequently produce private emoluments, and the accumulation of the latter is too endearing to suffer itself to be superseded by any reflections on the former."

In order to substantiate what he thus advances with much good-sense, the Marshal cites the following particular instance, among an infinity of others:—

"When the French army at the battle of Ramillies, was retiring in good order over an eminence that was rather confined, and on both sides of which there were deep ravines, the cavalry belonging to the allies followed its track

leisurely, without even appearing to wish to harass or attack its rear. The French continued their march with the same composure; retreating upon more than twenty lines, on account of the narrowness of the ground.

"On this occasion, a squadron of English horse got close to two French battalions, and began to fire upon them. The two battalions, naturally presuming that they were going to be attacked, faced about, and fired a volley at the squadron. What was the consequence? the whole of the French army took to its heels; the cavalry went off at full gallop; and all the infantry, instead of retiring with regularity over the heights, threw itself into the ravines in such dreadful disorder, that the ground above was almost instantly abandoned, and not a French soldier was seen upon it.

"Let any military man consider this notorious event, and then praise the regularity of a retreat, and the prudent foresight of those who, after an enemy has been vanquished in the field, relax in their exertions, and give him time to breathe. I do not, however, pretend to maintain, that all the forces of a victorious army should be employed to follow up the pursuit; but I am decidedly of opinion, that large

bodies should be detached for that purpose, and that the flying enemy should be annoyed as long as the day lasts. This must be done in good order. And let it be remembered, that when an enemy has once begun to retreat in earnest, you may drive him before you by the mere noise of empty bladders. If the officer who is detached in the pursuit of an enemy, begins to manœuvre after prescribed rules and regulations, and operate with slowness and precaution, he should be recalled; for the sole purpose of his employment is to push on vigorously, to harass and distress the foe. Every species of evolution will serve on this occasion; if any can be defective, the regular system might itself prove so.

"I SHALL conclude these observations by saying, that all retreats depend wholly upon the talents and abilities of generals, who must themselves be governed by circumstances and situations: but I will venture to assert, that no retreat can eventually succeed, unless it be made before an enemy who acts with blameable excess of caution; for if the latter follow up his first blow, the vanquished army must soon be thrown into utter confusion."

THE whole course of your education, my dear son, and, as far as I have observed it, your natural disposition, assure me that you would carry the polite and liberal accomplishments, as well as the moral and social virtues, into whatever station of life you should be placed in; and as yours is now destined to be the MILITARY, which is deservedly held the most honourable, I hope these Letters will have been effectual in instructing you how its union with those accomplishments and virtues may be attained. The peculiar virtues of the SOLDIER are well exemplified in the following character of the late general De Zieten, by his recent biographer.

UNITING wisdom with courage, contempt of danger with perseverance, dexterity with presence of mind, and activity with the most perfect command of temper; he conceived his plans with the progressiveness of the rising storm, and executed them with the rapidity of the thunderbolt. Unruffled in the heat of battle; singularly accurate and concise in giving his orders; foreseeing every thing, prepared for every thing; he was invariably able to turn the circumstances of the moment to ad-

vantage. His military glance was correct and infallible; he was equally admirable in attack and defence; capable of the most daring enterprises, but losing every idea of personal safety when his duty called him to engage in them, he never failed to acquit himself with success. In his principles he was firm, and his probity was invincible: he was a zealous patriot, who was attached to his sovereign by the indissoluble ties of affection and fidelity; and he evinced his loyalty and devotedness to him by the readiest sacrifices;—the sacrifice of every thing except his honour, his principles, his religion, and his country. He abhorred all illicit means of enriching himself; he was disinterested and unassuming; ever careless of acquiring the approbation of the great, or the admiration of the multitude, he was more desirous to be really good than to appear so. Ready to do justice to the merit of another, he esteemed every one who was commendable for conduct and virtues, and openly contemned such as were degraded by their vices. He was prompt to obey the orders of his prince, yet without giving up the right of consulting and availing himself of his own knowledge in the incidental execution of those orders. Incapable of bending

under the yoke of fear, or servilely cringing to authority, he invariably supported his dignity and character on every occasion. Such had been the general tenor of his conduct during the two Silesian wars, that he was considered as the tutelary genius of the army, the safety of which was in fact committed to his care in every march that was undertaken. Were the enemy to be attacked?—his station was in the van. Was it expedient to withdraw from action?—he it was who covered the retreat. He had often repaired the faults of other generals, and never erred himself but in one single instance,—and this was owing to the negligence of his patrols. Hence he possessed the esteem of the king and of his brother-officers, and acquired an unbounded ascendancy over the troops he commanded; who, fully sensible of his talents and his patriotism, were persuaded he would never lead them to face destruction, but when honour and necessity required it, and when victory would crown the enterprise. His name acquired universal celebrity; he was justly ranked among the most distinguished generals of the Prussian army, and considered as the model of a virtuous hero. The good admired him as the ornament of human nature; and his country in

reward of his merit, decorated him with the title of a true patriot.

To general admiration and esteem were joined sentiments of a more tender kind and more congenial to his nature; the affection and confidence of his brother officers and hussars. In the midst of the tumults of war he had ever preserved those social virtues which had marked the early period of his life. Guided and sustained by rational piety, his moral character still shone with undiminished lustre; while his talents, his faculties, his religious principles acquired new force as he advanced in his brilliant career. The pernicious maxim (the maxim of his day) that the duty of a soldier supersedes that of a man, was never adopted by him. The horrors of war to which he had been inured, never steeled his heart to the softer calls of humanity; and such feeling he considered, not only as far from degrading his profession, but even as one of its most noble appendages. Severe in the field, and inexorable in whatever regarded the duties of the military life (because he himself was the first to set the example, and had no errors or neglect on his own part to call for indulgence in favour of such as were guilty of either); he was in all other respects remarkable

for the gentleness, and even the complacency, of his manners. He was ever ready to accommodate those whom he commanded, to the utmost of his power; or to lighten with a kind word, a look, a smile, the burdens they had indispensably to sustain. His officers, his private soldiers (whom he loved with paternal affection), never solicited his counsel, his interposition, his succour in vain. Just and impartial in the extreme, he tolerated no oppression, no persecution; and though exact in the infliction of punishments, he was still more so in recompensing every noble, every liberal action.

He had always acted with feeling and equity towards the hostile nations, during the various incursions he had made among them. The laws of war never induced him to overlook the sacred rights of mankind. Far from countenancing any kind of exactions, he was the friend, the protector, the father, of the unfortunate inhabitants of the places which became the immediate seat of war. Whenever he received orders to pillage an enemy's country on leaving it, his custom was to observe the mere form only: he would cause a few windows to be broken, displace or overturn the furniture of a house or two; but was never known to deprive the inha-

bitants of what was absolutely necessary to them, or to commit a single act of barbarity. The soldier loved still more than he feared him. In every place his preservation was the object of universal concern. Not only his own country, but the nations who had known him merely as their enemy, did ample justice to his disinterestedness and greatness of mind.

As a general, and a commander in chief, he was never known to neglect any thing which had formerly been the object of his solicitude in the capacity of a subaltern officer. He extended to a whole regiment, to a whole army, the attention he had at first bestowed upon a single company. On the march, he was either at the head or the rear of the column, and always indefatigably employed in providing for every possible contingency. At one time he would slacken the march, in order to allow the hindermost to regain the ground they had lost; at another he would fill up the gaps, reconnoitre the bridges, the defiles, the face of the country; in a word, it might be said, that he never had a better quarter-master-general than himself.

When the army was encamped, Zieten was not satisfied till he had examined and adjusted

every thing, entered into the minutest details, supplied every omission, and obviated every inconvenience. Whenever he imagined that the king had neglected a point, he would look to it; he posted or displaced the guards of the camp, and augmented or diminished their number. When the ground was uneven, it was his care to remove all obstructions, facilitate communications, construct bridges, and every other necessary accommodation; and his directions were ever attended to as much as the immediate orders of the king.

After having provided for the interior of the camp, it was his custom to take a survey of its environs. By day and by night, while the rest of the army were taking their repose, he was on horseback, examining the face of the country, in order to discover on what point the enemy might probably make an attack, and what spots were best adapted for defence. This was his invariable occupation, on the march, in camp, and in every position; whence the army honoured him with the name of their guardian. When the infirmities of age began to grow upon him, and it sometimes happened that he fell asleep at the royal table, the king would never allow him to be disturbed. The first time that the company, upon such an oc-

casion, were about to awaken him, his majesty interrupted them, and said, "Let him sleep on; he has watched long enough for us."

FREDERIC esteemed him highly for the manly firmness of his character, which the greatest military disasters were never able to shake for a moment. Bred up in the midst of storms, he had learnt to face them without dismay. While others trembled, he remained calm, and put his entire confidence in Heaven. This placid intrepidity, this cool patience, this inexhaustible fund of resolution, had great influence upon the mind of his royal master; who had often, under the pressure of despair, sought the general's quarters, alone and during the night, in quest of consolation and advice. Often has the heart of Zieten been wrung with anguish, when, instead of coinciding in his way of thinking, the desponding monarch has made him no other reply than, "It will not do; it cannot possibly succeed!"

IN the various battles in which Zieten took an active or directing part, the youngest officers were well aware that they should not escape the general's observation,—that their exploits would be remarked, distinguished, and rewarded.—In the battle of Lignitz, at the attack of Laudon's

grenadiers previous to the general engagement, a young lieutenant, named Calbo, of the prince of Prussia's regiment, had received a wound. After the victory, Zieten passed near an officer who was under the hands of the surgeon. The general recognized Calbo, spoke in high terms of his courageous deportment, expressed his concern at his disaster, congratulated him that the wound was not of a dangerous nature, and took occasion to praise the services the regiment had done the army, and the bravery it had just displayed. Such a procedure could not fail to gain every heart. At the present day, M. de Calbo recollects with singular satisfaction this anecdote, and the impression it made upon him: an impression which upwards of forty years have not been able to efface. Thus could a word from Zieten operate in the breast of the young soldier, and prove a powerful incentive to glory and duty.

OFFICERS of merit, to whatever regiment they belonged, could confidently rely on his kind services and powerful interposition, in cases when, owing to the distance of their residence from the king, or to some unforeseen accident, and not to any fault of their own, they had lost the good graces of that prince. Zieten would watch for and seize the favourable moment to combat his

prejudices. Obliged often to repeat his applications he would never cease till they were crowned with success.—In the campaign of 1761, the king, with a view to hinder the junction of the enemy's two armies, had recourse to several extraordinary movements; and, one day, having ordered *Zieten* to make an expedition in his presence, in the neighbourhood of Klosten-Wahlstadt; the general detached to the left, for the purpose of reconnoitring a wood, two squadrons of the regiment of Finkenstein's dragoons,—a corps which his majesty had an aversion to. The head of these squadrons met in a valley a body of Austrian cavalry, consisting (as it has since appeared) of forty-two squadrons. As they were confined to a narrow pass, it was possible to attack them with advantage, provided the charge was made in a bold manner, and with all the appearance of being properly supported. The commanding officers of the two squadrons determined upon the attempt. Proud of repeating under the king's immediate inspection the exploits which had rendered them illustrious at Crefedt and Minden, the troops were resolved to force from that monarch the approbation which he had hitherto so unjustly refused them. After having agreed among themselves, not to waste any time

in taking prisoners, and being properly assured that Zieten would not fail to support them, they fell upon the enemy with louds shouts and inconceivable fury. The king had scarcely taken notice of this movement, when he sent one of his aides-de-camp, with all possible expedition, with these orders: "Tell Zieten to prevent the two squadrons from attacking the hostile cavalry, as they are not sufficiently strong for the attempt." The general sent back the officer, with the following reply: Inform the king that I request him to let them go on, and that he himself will have the goodness to be witness to their success; that I have always said they were brave troops; that it is now their business to shew themselves such; and that I shall take care to send the rest of the regiment to their support." The dragoons performed prodigies of valour: the promise of Zieten was realized; and the king, on their return, conferred upon every officer the order of military merit, and gave them leave to wear a particular kind of sabre in honour of the exploits of the day. From this time, Frederic continued to testify the highest esteem for the corps; and Zieten, who had the happiness, or rather the merit, of bringing about this revolution in his majesty's sentiments, never ceased to congratulate himself

on having chosen the favourable moment, and turned it to so good account.

Ever serious, often severe, with regard to the officers who were subordinate to him, and particularly when they were men of high rank, he required the same secrecy on their part as he himself observed in his most trivial expeditions. He carried his scruples so far on this point, as never to give his troops any intimation of their destined march till the very last minute. On the day preceding any movement, nothing was allowed to transpire, through the whole army; and the instructions or dispositions which he had to give the generals, were dictated to them in private, after having caused their aides-de-camp to withdraw. One day, when general de Bardemer, whose hand shook on account of his great age, had requested that his aide-de-camp should be permitted to sign in his stead, Zieten granted him that indulgence with no small reluctance, and not till the general had made himself responsible for the discretion of that officer.

His new officers, his new aides-de-camp, and especially when they were recommended by powerful patronage, were destined to act at first but passive and secondary parts. He commonly employed them in the most unimportant commis-

sions; and it was not till he had put them to the proof, and had become well acquainted with their several characters, that he gave them his confidence, and did justice to their deserts.

HE made choice of his aide-de-camp-majors from among the best of his officers. To fill this post, great talents and great activity were always requisite. Severe to an extreme with respect to them, and (at most) pardoning such errors only as resulted from youth and want of experience, he inured them to a rough discipline. Two eminent general officers of the present day were long engaged in this honourable post with him: the one, lieutenant-general de Köhler, whom he always called his pupil, his friend; who was tenderly esteemed by him, and whom he particularly recommended to the king; the other, major general de Lestocq, who succeeded the former. They were both proud to acknowledge, upon every occasion, what they owed to their master, their father, their friend.

To the severity which Zieten exerted in every thing that related to the service, he knew how to add proper indulgence, whenever he perceived that the officer was still more jealous of his honour than prone to subordination.—The case of M. de Romberg furnishes a proof of this. That

officer, a man of eminent talents, and whom his country would have numbered among its best commanders, had not an early death interrupted his military career, was aide-de-camp-major to Zieten. One day, being charged by him with a commission of small importance, and sensible that it was confined to the mere delivery of a message, he employed a dragoon to execute it, and dispatched him for that purpose in the presence of the general, who, struck with the lesson, turned coolly towards him, and said, "So, my good lieutenant! it seems you are become a great man." On the same day, however, he declared at table, in the presence of several officers, that Romberg had done well not to debase his rank; that, for his own part, he liked to see a man properly jealous of his rights; that a well-timed resistance indicated a good officer, and restrained the general within proper bounds, by hindering him from degrading his subalterns, as he acknowledged he had himself done that morning.

ALTHOUGH during the latter years of the war, Zieten had seldom met his regiment*, he was never neglectful of any thing which he owed it in the capacity of its colonel. The internal and

* The Death's-Head Hussars.

particular arrangement of the corps was his own work, and its exploits his recompense. Through the whole army, and even among the enemy, one general opinion prevailed with regard to the good order and bravery of the troops. Governed by ambition, by emulation, and incited by glory, the hussars of Zieten, whether officers or private soldiers, were ever anxious to emulate their commander; who on his part carried the confidence he had in them to such a degree, as to imagine himself invincible at their head. Whenever it happened that he encamped in the midst of his regiment, he considered himself more secure than he could be in any other situation. It was then of little import to him, whether the enemy were near or at a distance; after having visited the quarters, he would retire to his tent, and give himself up to rest. He was one day so slightly guarded, and lay so much exposed to a sudden attack, that an officer belonging to another regiment could not refrain from remarking the danger he was in. Zieten made him no other reply than, "Am I not in the midst of my hussars?" The regiment caught the words; and what was nothing more than a well-deserved eulogium, proved a further encouragement to them, and strengthened the bands of affection and devoted-

ness which attached them to their colonel. After peace was made, his officers and soldier flocked to Zieten, as to their common father, to shew him the scars that graced their persons; and to remind him of the spots, and the honourable occasions, on which they had gained them.

THE lessons and examples, my dear son, which I have thus put together for your improvement, will, I trust, if attended to, and imitated, contribute to make you all that a fond father can wish you: if your career is cut short by an honourable death, to render you a worthy sacrifice on the altar of your country's cause; or if you live to the enjoyment of an old age, to give you that old age crowned with glory, and (what is more) with self-satisfaction and esteem.

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